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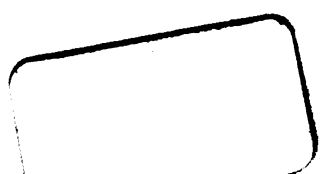
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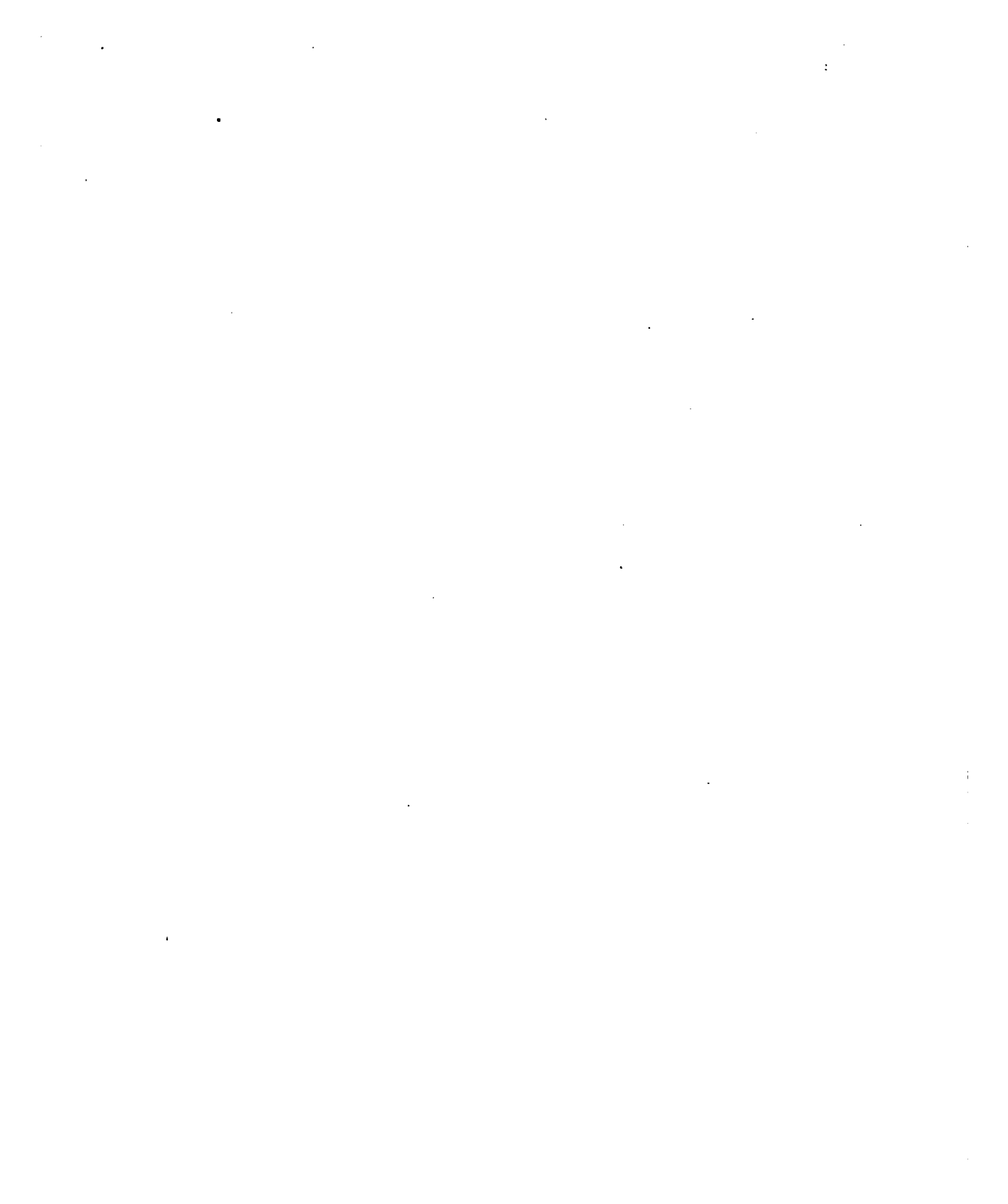


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THE BLOSSOMING ROD

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

S. H. PALFREY (E. FOXTON)

AUTHOR OF "HERMAN; OR, YOUNG KNIGHTHOOD," "SIR PAVON AND SAINT PAVON,"
"AGNES WENTWORTH," "THE CHAPLAIN," ETC.

*Neque, te ut miretur turba, labores,
Contentus paucis lectoribus*

HORACE

BOSTON

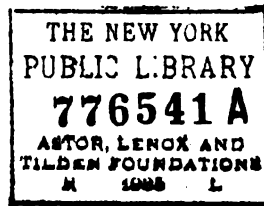
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THE BLOSSOMING ROD;

OR, SISTER ELLEN.

“Be strong; be worthy of the grace
Of God, and fill thy destined place;
A Soul, by force of sorrows high,
Uplifted to the purest sky
Of undisturbed humanity.”

WORDSWORTH.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN earth too sad and heaven too far appears,
There is a sphere that's hid between their spheres,
Best spied by Fancy through a lens of tears.
There poets often for a refuge fly.

There have I chanced a woman to descry,
Whose face was never seen by fleshly eye, —
Whose voice by fleshly ear was never heard.
In secret spake she many a heartfelt word,
Which, as I might, I gathered up and stored.

Though lofty, scarcely haughty was her mien,
And through her look, it seemed to me, was seen
A soul that true and fair had always been.

I show her to you as I heard and saw, —
Nay, make her show herself, — and so withdraw,
And let you thresh and winnow grain and straw.

PART I.

My loved ones, with my blessing, forth are gone
To ramble towards the sunset. I alone
Kneel in my darkness with an inward moan.

I murmur not. Need men demand of me
That I should "always very happy" be?
Oh God, my God, thou seest not as they see!
Beauty, they say, is mine, — wealth, — health enough;
But happiness is made of other stuff.
The cross may gilded be, and still be rough
To tender palms that strive to bear it up;
And gall and vinegar may fill the cup
Whose jewels sparkle at the lips that sup.

I am so lonely! Oh, my dead! my dead!
'Neath your green roof when may I make my bed,
And lay near yours my high, uncherished head?

I know it is not mine to die of woe, —
Else bells had tolled for me long years ago.
That 's for the weak. We others suffer so, —
So mightily and silently and long!
God's hand is skilful, — kind, — but very strong;
Deep wounds it makes sometimes. Oh, is it wrong
To miss the dear, soft, human grasp so warm
That met ours once in anguish or alarm, —
To long to lean upon one human arm?

This is my birthday. How some birthdays black
Will beckon us along a dreary track
Paven with frozen tears, and yet point back
To sunny ones when still our sky was blue!

And such a one I had — and is it true? —
But fourteen years ago.

The war was new, —
So new, as yet we knew not what war meant.
Through all the quickened air a thrill it sent
Of life, not death. Before it Glory went.
The strife for pelf and pleasure knew a pause.
The streets were full of “ Freedom and the laws.”
Through windows came, “ The country ” and “ the cause,”
When they were open. If we shut them down,
Still through them rang the tune of “ Old John Brown ; ”
And to it marched the feet of all the town.

Men's common metal 'neath the pressure wide
Took noble stamps, while heroes' at their side
Shone out like gold that in the fire is tried.

Then women loved the bravest men the best,
All else unheeding. I among the rest —
The happy — deemed myself of all most blest.
Then the times' fervour thawed much social ice ;
And matches — some — were vamped up in a trice,
That had perhaps been better thought on twice.

Not quite such ours. But just a woman grown,
For years I had young Arthur Knightley known ;
Till lifted by degrees he sat alone
(As votaries reverent set an image on
A pedestal, and on its head a crown,
But ne'er expect their idol to come down), —
He sat enthroned within my girlish mind,
The kindest, wisest, manliest of mankind, —
Yet thought me proud — towards him ! — So Love is blind !
Perhaps it was my more than common height

Of stature, scarce yet used itself aright
To bear, that so disguised me in his sight.
Some spirits too, — and Arthur's own was such, —
Will backward lean for fear to stoop too much, —
Put prizes from them lest they seem to clutch.
And he was poor. As in the days of old,
Some lone girls still sit prisoners in the hold
Of fastnesses — of Fashion and of Gold.
If proud my heart, 't was towards itself; the keys,
It could not yield unsummoned, for its ease,
And cry, " Good sir, pray enter when you please ! " —
If proud, 't was so for him. A love unsought
All too unworthy of him, had I thought.
Such offering to such shrine I ne'er had brought.

Thus, like two statues standing face to face, —
An aisle between them, — did we keep our place,
Towards one another stirring not a pace,
As if we waited for the end of the world ;
When round us suddenly the *cyclone* whirled,
And at one's feet perforce the other hurled.

Stand off he could, but could not further go
From me, he found, in silence, — first must show
At least what love he bore to me ; and so —
'T was, as I said, my birthday ; and apart
I stood, and fondled in my hands a heart, —
A little, quaint old locket, — with a dart
That opened it if somewhat strongly pressed.
My stepfather " received it from the breast
Of my own dying mother. As the best
He had to give, he gave it me to wear,"
He said, " in memory of the duteous care

With which I cherished him and their little Clare."
That pretty child, his errand having done,
With thanks and kisses back to him had run,
And left me with my trinket in the sun,
That struck and made it twinkle like a star
Athwart my tears. (One seemed to me afar
To smile on me from where the angels are.)

Then suddenly beside me Arthur stood
To take advantage of my softened mood ;
And answering it his words came like a flood :
"So you love hearts ! — I want a heart, Miss Nell,
But not like that ! — But first unto me tell
If you could love a human heart as well, —
A heart that boasts no diamonds nor gold,
Nor needs them while its inmost doth infold
A gem long treasured with a love untold ;
Then give me yours, — take mine, — take all of me,
If not for what I am, for what I 'll be,
So God grant grace great as my ecstasy ! —
If not, then cast it down. I cannot take
It ever back again. It was too weak
To hold its secret longer. Let it break."

I sought, and found not, words to match my bliss.
He read my rapturous trouble not amiss ;
The hands that clasped the heart were clasped in his !

(How all comes back, save him who comes no more ! —
The self-same oblong sunshine on the floor, —
The roses round the vainly open door !)

Then God for me made all things new. That day
I pitied the poor dead in graves that lay, —
I, who was soon to be more dead than they !

Then followed days which taught me to combine
The mirth and melancholy that were mine
Into a joyous calm, dear love, like thine.
Each moment that could spare him from the camp
Brought him to me 'neath sun or moon or lamp.
The gladness of his *now* I did not damp
With dark forebodings. Danger's shadow black
Seemed *but* a shadow on the onward track.
Where Duty led, I would not draw him back.
Soon Glory should be his ; and mine, to prove
Myself a hero's worthy lady-love.
"You're pale?" Shame spread her colours, Fear's above.
We walked ; we talked ; we sang ; our voices poured,
"Mine eyes have seen . . . the coming of the Lord !"
His glorified my own at every chord.

To bitter turned our sweet, — that could not sour, —
Too soon ; and in my honeysuckle bower
We sat, and could not speak, — one parting hour, —
Lest speech should falter into sobs.

'T was past !

He caught my hands once more and held them fast :
"One kiss?" he cried, "the first, — perhaps the last !"
I said not nay. My lips to his were pressed ;
Then sank my brow upon his pure, true breast.
Shrined in each other's arms one instant blest
We stood.

Then rushed the train, with roar and yell,
Down like the tramp of Doom, and tolled a knell !
He broke from me, too full to say farewell.

It seemed a strange surprise, to find him gone.

I chid myself for feeling so alone :

"Nay, his dear letters will be here anon."

I could not sleep. I would not name it Fear,
But some dread Presence, in the dark, was near.
I prayed and prayed. Before the Dawn was clear
I rose to see the sun, — to shine on him
'Mid the far tents. My eyes were very dim
With unshed tears. I said my morning hymn,
But did not sing that day. The unfeeling birds
Did that for me in wild songs without words, —
Joyless to me as lowings of the herds
Driven off to feed the war.

Two more days went, —
No tidings brought, — two nights, — and almost spent
I rose once more, and on my window leant ;
And if my eyes were shut, I do not know,
But, — suddenly the air seemed all aglow
With one red flash, though yet the sun was low
And had not climbed the waves. Then came a shock
As if a thunder-bolt had rent a rock,
And then — my Arthur ! — with the saintly calm
Of one who has exchanged the sword for palm, —
Endured the wound, and only feels the balm.
All pity and no pain, he seemed to say,
"I wait you there," bent o'er me as I lay,
Then pointing upward faded slow away.

The servants came and laid me in my bed.
My stepfather came too and smiling said,

That I "must oust such fancies from my head,
 And eat and sleep, or I should be quite ill.
He thought the dawn looked red ; but 't was too chill
 For him to rise and see. (Folks should lie still
 An hour full after sunrise.) And he thought
 That others' ears some thunder-claps had caught.
 But what of that? 'T was all a dream or naught."

I only wept. These visions are for those
 To whom they 're sent. Their truth can none disclose
 To others. He who sees, — he only, — knows.
 But I, who have seen, henceforth hold the faith
 That holy Love hath power to conquer Death
 And, ere I yield it up, shall yield my breath.

They talked, but only looked and whispered soon.
 A ring, — a message, — at the door, the boon
 Of silence brought to me before that noon,
 Bringing to them the news, not new to me
 Save in the where and how :

That morning he
 Was by a cry of " Fire ! " roused suddenly
 And, darting from his own well-guarded tent,
 Found in a near, ill-ordered regiment,
 A drunken sentry with a pipe had leant
 Upon a powder-cart, and sparks let fall
 That set the weeds ablaze in streamers tall.
 He rushed to ward the doom that threatened all,
 And met his own — in vain ! —

That hurts me still.
 His good seemed powerless against others' ill.
 Fame with his deeds will ne'er her trumpet fill.
 Too soon the tide closed o'er him merciless, —

The tide of grave-mould and forgetfulness.
Yet this, sweet soul, must give thee full redress, —
Giving some even to the pain and pride
Of her who should have been thy thrice-blest bride, —
Thou 'rt well remembered on the other side.
Where God in deathless memory keeps His own,
Thou hast thy place before the great white Throne,
When his bright legions doth review, the Son.

I lay, — I think, — until some weeks rolled round.
They shut me up from every sight and sound,
For fear that I should have my Arthur found.

My fever burnt itself away. They gave
A letter marked " Mis-sent " to me, — with leave
To read it, — like a missive from the grave.
They bade me to give thanks for my escape
And rise.

I rose, to view the world through crape
And strive anew my lonely course to shape,
Picked up the scattered fragments, one by one,
Of my young shattered life so woe-begone,
And tried, somehow, to make it still go on,
As clocks may turn their wheels and keep their time
And wave their hands in weary pantomime,
When dumb forever is their tuneful chime.

(If clarions sound no more a merry call,
A dead-march rather than no march at all.
To walk or stand is better than to fall.)

I kept my feet. I sent for little Clare,
Gave her my grapes and flowers, and stroked her hair,

And ordered her "a doll with ringlets fair,
That she had wanted, oh so long! — so long! —
But must not tease me till I should be strong," —
And had its fineries made, my weeds among.
I took my stepfather to drive, and read
The newspapers to him. "It saved his head." —
"You miss the war-news, dear. How many dead?" —
I heard him say, "My fears are quite at rest
For her. Old interests now resume their zest.
We need her much; and — all is for the best."

The season waned, as aye the seasons will, —
How strange! — however Time, with us, stands still;
And I resolved ere winter to fulfil
A plan, that haunted me with yearning gloom
And dread, — to seek my Arthur's hapless home,
And over-weep his mother and his tomb.

I bade the good, dear nurse my courier be,
Who won me late from Death so tenderly
That I forgave that turn she did to me.
She had the gift of silence, — sympathy
Not heard, but felt.

The heavenly autumn day
Spake less of life than of eternity.
The trees flew by transfigured, — changed, not lost.
The air was like that breath, ere Pentecost
When Jesus said, "Receive the Holy Ghost."
The light was like the smile that soothed men's fears,
When once our Saviour shared our bitter years, —
A tender radiance softer still than tears.

She found the churchyard, and stopped quietly
Before its gate to wait. It seemed to me
A garden that was nigh to Calvary !

Oh God ! What other griefs were buried there,
I did not know, — I could not think nor care, —
Nor thought my mighty agony to share ;
But hurrying, stumbling, o'er the dismal ground,
The fresh-cut stone, name, early age, I found, —
The goal of those young feet, the low, blank mound !

That sight half blinded me. In fear to fall,
Hard by, where fir-trees spread a sheltering pall,
I sank. . . .

A little school-boy leapt the wall
And ran, like one accustomed to the place,
Unwavering 'mid the graves a steady race
Straight on towards *mine*. I had not marked his face, —
Scarce him, indeed ; but there the childish feet,
Ill-shod, stopped short, — that were so sure and fleet, —
And stamped ; and his small hands each other beat.
He could not see me ; but he seemed to see
Where flowers lay on some other grave ; when he
Snatched up the fallen leaves, and piteously
Wrought of their dying amber, gold, and red
A fiery crown, and laid it where the head,
I knew, unseen was lying of *our* dead.
I stole, and o'er him bent with my supplies
Of blossoms pale. He turned in quick surprise,
And looked up in my face with Arthur's eyes !

He rose at once, appeared to understand,
Doffed his worn cap, and took my offered hand
Most like a little prince, dethroned yet grand.
White, tearless, firm beneath our common loss,
He helped me to arrange a flowery cross,
And bordered it with gathered ferns on moss.
And when he took his books and went before
"To tell his mother," who drew near her door,
I found the crisis of my grief was o'er, —
Yet lingered on, and longed to lay me down
And rest like *him* from all life's miseries flown,
A partner in his cross and in his crown.

As 't were a leaf of healing for my smart,
I took a linden-leaf, — a withering heart, —
And laid it on my own, and did depart.

Unto the farm-house must I next repair, —
Alas, to find me such cold comfort there
As, to fresh wounds, doth bring a raw fresh air !
The father, at whose knees I could have knelt,
Showed feeling none, whate'er he must have felt, —
An icy, granite man, who could not melt.
His daughters three looked carved out of the same
Dry stone. He seemed half-proudly to proclaim
Each one disfigured with some rude old name,
Which on the wincing ear in discord fell,
Of coarse, distasteful ancestry to tell, —
"Desire and Hephzy and Mehetabel."
All stared, spoke, stopped, and nothing found to say.
Hot, cold, and faint, I wished myself away,

And shuddered at the hour I had to stay.

Where was the mother? Slow and soft as dew,
At last she came. My fellow-Grief I knew,
And breathless murmured, "May I come with you?"
With tender, timid haste, and none too soon
She led me thence to save me from a swoon.

Her face was like the shady, waning moon;
But watching it I by degrees could see
How little Frank and Arthur came to be.
Her tears seemed spent. Exchanging sighs with me
She said, "We might not have to mourn him long;
She was not, and she feared I was not, strong;
For both of us, kind Death would right Death's wrong. —
Yet why say *wrong*? It was our God's behest.
She knew her Arthur was among the blest.
Her children happy, she could bear the rest."
(A woman so accustomed to be sad,
She seemed, 't were stranger to her to be glad.)
" 'T was hard for Frank."

"Where was her little lad?"

She called him in; and readily he came,
And showed a face that answered to his name,
Free, eager, generous, pitying, — not too tame.
(In children, here and there the diverse strain
Of ill-matched pairs seems harmonized again,
One's *fineness* with one's force, — and not in vain.)
He sat beside my couch with her, nor stirred,
Nor spoke, save with his looks that every word
Seemed echoing deeply, as I lay and heard
How, "Arthur always cherished like a son
This little brother, — only younger one," —

How much had done for him, — how much foregone.

I started ; it was like a quick appeal
Out of a grave. My feeling did she feel, —
Scarce read aright. I heard a silence steal
Between us ; and I saw a painful blush
O'er pallid cheek and temple, flit and gush ;
Then on some other topic did she rush.
(Unwittingly her words had told a need.)
I lay and took, but showed not any, heed,
And turned my speech where'er she chose to lead.

A lone wild-rosebush, 'mid the bleak White Hills
Set on a northward ledge unfed by rills
Or springs, save what a pitying heaven distils,
She seemed most like, — for sunshine meant and bloom,
But uncomplaining 'neath a dreary doom
To pine away to death in drought and gloom.

Our sweet and bitter interview nigh o'er,
My ponies' hoofs were clattering at the door,
When falteringly I ventured to implore,
"If it were not too much to ask, that she
Would let her little son return with me,
My guest, unto my home beside the sea."

His face, too grave and thoughtful for a child,
Flashed out such gladness that his mother smiled,
And I too, of our sorrows half beguiled.
Its radiant pleading scarce could plead in vain.
In haste we helped him gather up amain
His little boyish clothes, so few, — so plain ! —
His "Crusoe," boat, — the dog whose nose did cleave
Unto his hand, not even would I leave ;
Too well I saw their parting both would grieve.

Its whines to barkings turned with many a prank ;
Down at my feet at ease its master sank ;
(There always, everywhere, was room for Frank.)
Oh, was I selfish ? — Then I did not know,
Poor mother, what might be our inward woe,
When one we love doth love to leave us so.
I only thought, " O'er heaven's wall looking down,
A blossom sweet, to me has Arthur thrown
To cheer me homewards on my journey lone,
As happy lovers, on this earth who live, —
Not too far off for meetings, — parting give
Posies that happy loved ones do receive ? "

Nurse raised the reins ; the horses, head and heel ;
They tossed their foam and champed the bit to feel. —
That headlong boy flew o'er the turning wheel !
Full little of our outcry did he reckon,
But hung once more about his mother's neck,
And pressed redoubled kisses on her cheek,
Then scrambled nimbly back and, self-controlled,
Watched while her watching form he could behold, —
A tender heart and only eight years old.

He stayed a week ; and when the week was gone
I wrote ; well-pleased the child stayed on and on,
And opened like a rose-bud in the sun, —
Indulged and cheered, began to laugh and play.
It soothed my grief to see his fade away ;
And all the house was brighter for his stay.

That house of warmth and comfort, — somewhat close,
Perhaps, — he rushed through as the west-wind does,

That seems to freshen all where'er it goes ;
But, howsoever tricky, bold, and free,
He kept through all the wildness of his glee
His constant tender loyalty to me.

I was the heiress, — so it did befall, —
And held the purse that held enough for all ;
And no one said me nay, of great or small.
I had him for a season, — then, a year. —
Then he might stay until it should appear,
That the town's smoke would soil his spirit clear.
(It never did. That boyhood high and bright !)
That balanced nature, sturdy and upright
As cedars' pointing to the zenith's light,
It ne'er had need of any prying spy !
A guardian-angel's watch of sympathy,
I tried to keep ; my duty bade me try.
And as I came to know and love the boy,
A slow content, — I never named it joy, —
In him, upon me grew with small alloy.

My little Clara had some fear of boys :
She "thought that they were rude, and made a noise."
She "hoped he would not take or break her toys."
That was at first. Then he would sometimes tease,
Pretend to claim her place upon my knees,
Or stretch a hand as if her doll to seize, —
A brown hand marked with cuts his jack-knife made, —
Then laugh like Ariel at "her afraid !" —
Till "Sister Nelly !" plaintively she said.
Or both cried, — she in earnest, he in jest, —
"Now, Sister Nelly, don't you love me best ?"
(To call me so, I bade my little guest.

So had I been, had War his brother spared.
Though lost the happiness he then had shared,
I strove to care for him as Arthur cared.)

I said, with hands among the pretty twirls
Of flaxen ringlets long and chestnut curls,
"I love him best of boys, — you best of girls," —
As mothers do, and added playfully,
"But I shall love both better when I see,
You learn to love each other and agree."

And soon they did — agree. Her "baby plays,"
He somewhat scorned, and little petted ways,
But made or mended on his holidays
Just what she wanted ; and the younger child
Was always docile, innocent, and mild.
He laughed at her no more, but slyly smiled.

My stepfather beheld with anxious looks
When, in the library's most sacred nooks,
He caught him revelling in my father's books ;
But soon the kindly, college-bred old man
Perceived him harmless, showed him how to scan,
And praised his cleverness when out he ran.
Nor did he from my purpose me dissuade,
But very kindly offered me his aid
To make him all that Arthur would have made.

"*You ! — rear a boy ?*" — some doubted if I could.
"He rears himself," I answered proud of mood ;
"We make him happy ; and God makes him good."

(I had not stripped the homestead. Ammidown
Was left, an honest, kindly, comely — clown,
Who dined with me whene'er he came to town.)

I had grown up to, — in the good old way, —
Make morning calls — and gingerbread — and play
On the piano for an hour a day.
Now, when the winter brought the frost and snow,
Frank wooed me with him on the ice to go :
“ Dear boy, *I* cannot skate !” “ I ’ll teach you, though.”

My indoor feet, he deftly shod with steel ;
And soon I learned to dart and veer and wheel, —
Learned stern, weird Nature’s power to numb and heal,
And, like a snow-bird flying on the wind,
Could for the moment leave my thoughts behind, —
Dazzled with speed, could be to memory blind.
I wrote the record of my way in rime ;
I won the freedom of gray Niflheim,
And dreamed myself a ghost cut loose from time ;
While all around us bodiless Voices sang,
The pine-woods made their sleety cymbals clang,
And Echoes ’mid th’ encircling hill-sides rang.
The Sunsets glowed above, and ’neath our feet ;
And with the Moon the Evening Star shone sweet
On our unearthly course so smooth and fleet.

But little Clare, — she “ wanted me at home !”
“ Go, ask papa, love, if you may not come
With us in little skates, — I ’ll give you some.” —

“ No, little dear ; you would not like to skate.
You ’d only fall and break your little pate.
’T is not for little *ladies*, — only *great*,” —
The old man answered, with a shaken head,
But let me take her in a snow-white sled, —
Shaped like a swan, — in ermine wrapped and red.
My nurslings were a lovely sight to see, —

He darting on, her courser fleet and free, —
Composed and like a small, fair princess she.

When Sunday came, the boy would go to church ;
I would not he should leave me in the lurch ;
We sought the nearest without further search.
'T was long since public worship did I use.
Public example were a poor excuse ;
But this was mine : I knew not how to choose.
My mother lived not in those days of drouth.
(The Wares and Channing strove to give her youth,
Christ's truth, whole truth, and nothing but the truth.)
My stepfather unto " ' the preachèd word,'
Much his own thoughts [or naps, perhaps,] preferred.
He could not hear, and liked not what he heard."
I knew not where to find, for my great need,
The old, pure doctrine of the " Apostles' Creed," —
Of heaven, and earthly peace, the title-deed.

Once Christ's ambassadors forth boldly stood,
Who had some sturdy iron in their blood,
And did not coax, but bade men to be good, —
Believe, — be saved. Now we 're so " liberal " !
How sins or sinners, sinful dare we call?
Wrong may a higher right be, after all.
If Anti-Christ be insolent and rough,
Be sure we pay him compliments enough, —
Pelt hornets' nests with many a powder-puff.
Can pastors blame the flocks because they stray, —
When they are led along a desert way
Where weeds and *lamb-kill* grow, — for even dry hay?
Do I speak bitterly? — In a cruel strait

I've sought a "steeple-house," to find the gate
 "Closed for the season." (Pray do demons wait
 For autumn? Or is God locked out? — no praise
 That He should have, within the holy place,
 Because He sends the happy, holidays
 And pastime?) If the doors were open half
 The day, I've had my famine fed with chaff
 Fit to make angels weep and Satan laugh.

For prayer, I've heard some consecrated youth,
 Rising complacently, with utterance smooth,
 In the dread presence of the infinite Truth
 Tell infinite — *untruths*, — as, that "*We* have come,
 This morning, up from many a happy home,"
 In such a state of mind as haply some
 Most holy saint may reach, through toils and groans,
 In holiest hours; while, to the plausible tones
 Attending face in hat, may Brother Jones
 Laugh in his hat to think how Brother Brown
 Tried to "get round" him yesterday down in town,
 And how to-morrow he will in his own
 Coin pay him off, — yea, even to the full.
 ("Trade has its laws," we know, — for "Bear" and "Bull," —
 Not always codified with the Golden Rule.)

Then would the modern scribe the people teach;
 And for the Law and Gospel, he should preach
 With reverent confidence, I've had a speech
 Stuffed out with "protoplasm" and pedantries, —
 The veriest sweepings of the laborat'ries, —
 At second-hand, with all the crudities
 Of pulpit "science" and scientific "faith";
 And which the crudest, this deponent saith

Not, — but all *Unders* have their *Underneath*.

To reconcile the two, he mildly tries ;

And round about the universe he flies,

Full, as a peacock's tail of eyes, of *I's* :

“ Now heaven forbid such narrowness, that I

Should say, Faith better is than heresy ;

[Perhaps 't is not, when 't is so cowardly.]

'T is always hard the absolute truth to find.

I would not bid you lag the age behind.

These views approve themselves to my own mind ;

And if they don't to *your* own minds, — then, — why,

Of course you all can judge as well as I, —

In these enlightened days especially

When the renowned Professor Thingamy,

Who is so mighty in microscopy,

Deigns to instruct us in theology.

He honestly avows he cannot see,

For his part, how the dead should raised be ; —

And, if *he* can't, how can the Deity ? —

That question somewhat baffles me, I own.

Till his positions can be overthrown,

I take my stand on intuition. —

He cannot see what good it does to pray. —

Primordial forces all must have their way,

Of course, in spite of all that we can say ;

But prayer 's a soothing practice, howsoe'er

The Final Cause may lend, or not, an ear,

Without a hand to help, at least to hear. —

So much we reason, we can scarce believe.

Locke's puerilities, how can we receive, —

Or Butler's, — now, but with a negative ? —

With minds so great as ours, how can we have
Room still for souls? — The emancipated slave,
If sadder, is a thing more wise and brave." —

And so on, — as if we had bent our knees
In the "Thought-shop" of Aristophanes,
To learn aright — the jumping-powers of fleas, —
Taught there to cast the exploded Godhead by, —
Scarce current coin, — own no Divinity
Save Chaos, Clouds, and Tongue, the mighty Three !

But if men of the average length of limb
Try wading through the deepest places dim
Of the universe, — and straight must sink or swim, —
'T is scarce a proof, howe'er their shrieks declare
To anxious hearers, that no ground is there
For Faith, — no Rock of Ages showing where.

Burns lurid your "new light" as burned, blind guide,
The fire that Simon Peter stood beside,
And warmed himself ere he his Lord denied !

Enough of this. This time my chance did fall
On an old man devout and scriptural,
And not so wildly "intellectual."
The prayers were those that have been handed down,
A precious legacy from times scarce known,
Full of the wants that Man has ne'er outgrown.
(If, here and there the printed pages o'er,
Some mediæval fiction left a blur,
The honest lips were warned and closed before.)
How many, since the early church believed,
In those dear words have asked, and have received, —
Have breathed their fears and woes, and been relieved !
It seemed to me while thus we knelt to pray,

As children do when parents teach the way,
That saints in glory *told us what to say*, —
Saints that on earth like me had sighed and striven, —
Unlike me, hallowed, comforted, and shriven,
Had followed their petitions up to heaven.

There, summoned by the music of the chimes,
Henceforth we duly spent our holy times.
The child's sweet voice was heard in chants and rhymes ;
While, standing at his side in awed content,
I thought, " My love, a holy innocent
To lead me up to him, hath surely sent."
(I signed no word that I did not believe,
Nor would with brittle vows my conscience grieve,
But strove according to my faith, to live.)

Frank's mother seldom came, though often pressed.
She found him well, good, — well, though simply, dressed ; —
His friends, — books, — masters, — all were of the best.
She came to visit him on birthdays three,
And *thanked* me o'er and o'er, — so tenderly ! —
And then — he had no mother more but me.
And so he grew to me as brother, son,
And tender little lover, all in one ;
While ever on the stealthy years did run.

In resignation calm and purposeless
I prayed God for no change, — no more or less ; —
What other love should e'er my pathway bless ?
If suitors came, — some came, though not a crowd, —
I pointed to my weeds, that cried aloud,
" No bridal white for her, before her shroud ! "

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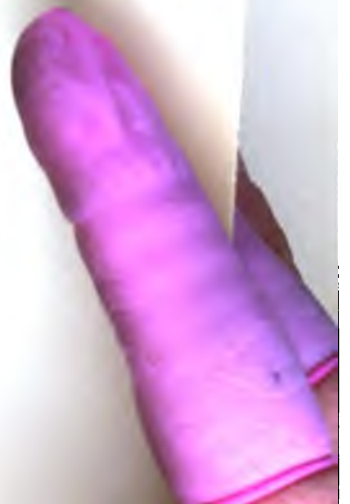
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THE BLOSSOMING AGE

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"Closed for the seaside" — (May — ~~the~~
For autumn? Or is God ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~
That He should have, when the day ~~the~~
Because He sends the night ~~the~~
And pastime?) If the hours were ~~the~~
The day, I've had my ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~
Fit to make angels weep and ~~the~~
For prayer, I've heard some ~~the~~
Rising complacently, with ~~the~~
In the dread presence of the ~~the~~
Tell infinite — ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~
This morning, up from ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~
In such a state of mind as ~~the~~
Most holy saint may reach, ~~the~~
In holiest hours: while, to the ~~the~~
Attending face in hat, may ~~the~~
Laugh in his hat to think how ~~the~~
Tried to "get round" him ~~the~~
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 ason, we can scarce believe.
 ies, how can we receive, —
 ow, but with a negative? —



A door would bang, — a hat, be shot away, —
And at my feet upon the rug he lay
At twilight, with the story of his day
Poured out pell-mell, — a rushing flood of fun,
With all that he had seen and heard — and done,
Or well or ill, — from rise to set of sun.
(The talker's, — like the "poet, — born, not made ;"
Or rather birth and making join their aid
To perfect both, when both are perfected.)
Fire, force, and feeling, — hatred of the base, —
In his unstudied speech all found their place.
I, laughing, chid sometimes, — strove not to praise,
Lest praise should mar his grand spontaneousness,
Childlike not childish, that had ne'er grown less.
How hard it was to drive him off to dress !

How peaceful still, awaiting him to sit
And have the chandelier he loved, alit,
And presently see brightening under it
The high and noble head, the royal mouth,
The eyes of trusty purity and truth,
The look of strong, benign, and happy Youth !

(Were mine the ghost of Happiness, when we
Are dead, must we forswear ghosts' company ? —
Forever haunted by ourselves ? — Ah me !)

Soon little Clare would from her father's knee
Slide down, and call us both to share his tea
At their end of the long old library,
Then win us all to join her in some game,
Until her nurse for her at bed-time came ;
When like a fine old Rembrandt in a frame
Dozed in his chair, her cosy, rosy sire

Within the Canton screen, while glanced the fire
At comely cheeks and curls like silver wire ;
And gentle breathings from his slumberous ease
Spread through the room an even rhythm of peace ;
And soothed his ear, our tones that did not cease.

Then would we rifle many an old brown tome, —
Then learned the glorious lore of Greece and Rome ;
(Then sometimes, lest the end too soon should come,
My naughty youth would tamper with the clock,
Until I took the key from out the lock.)
Then would we smite our wits upon the rock
Of Dante's Tuscan, till it gave us out
The swelling torrent of his mighty thought.
Poet of poets, too near God for doubt,
How hadst thou risen with a Titan's rage
Against this heresy of our heretic age,
That " Art " forsooth must banish from her page
The moral meaning ! From our presses roll
Hence shoals of books like bodies without soul, —
Scarce, save as well-made corses, beautiful, —
Whose charnel charms the next-door Future must,
When Faith returns, behold with shocked disgust,
If aught of them remains but deadly dust !
Best singer of best song, thou sang'st the bliss
That 's only found in God, — transfused in His
Man's lower wills and loves ; — (had I learned *this* !)

Last, psalm and gospel would the old man rouse
To hear with folded hands. Then to the mouse'
And cricket's watch, was left the well-locked house.

Why scan our past's eventless records o'er, —
To only *one's* sad memory, dear and sore? —
They only tell the change from much to more.

At college still, Frank's comrades were the best ;
And still I saw him greater than the rest, —
The easy prince among his peers confessed.
He rode ; he rowed ; he fenced ; he sang ; he drew ;
Just what he would, he did, and nobly too.
But sports whereon some youth, and not a few,
Spend the best strength of youth, were even then
But sport to him. His work with brain and pen
Already drew on him the eyes of men.

Still to "his home," — mine, — on a holiday
He came ; and oft his classmates fresh and gay
Would "call on him," — to see my Clare, would stay.
As fair and rare as any casket-pearl, —
At heart a loving, dutiful, good girl, —
She looked a mate for any star-decked earl.
My white moss-rosebud in a shady bower, —
She sweetened all around her hour by hour.
Though seldom can one talk much with a flower,
She sang beyond the nightingale ; and they
Around her sang their happy eves away ;
While I, who could not sing, could hear and play.

My own last note with Arthur had been sung.
My shriek, that on that fearful morning rung,
Had banished song forever from my tongue.

But, I "could talk," they said. As flint to steel,
Frank's speech was unto mine, or wheel, that wheel
Sets whirling in a clock ; and I could feel
His sparkling mind my grief-numbed powers refill

With life and quickness ; as the electric thrill,
The paralyzed with warmth and motion will.
(Henceforth I like an organ locked must be, —
The stops all there, — all dumb, — and lost the key, —
The careless player turned for aye from me.)

Once too I said to him, " It made me glad
To see that now my dearest lass and lad
Cared for each other more than once they had."

He blushed and answered, " I am glad we do.
I should love everything that 's dear to you,
My more than *sister* Ellen, kind and true."

Thus still my life, into his wider one
Let out, ran with it ever-broadening on,
As brooks in rivers that towards ocean run.

Four more years gone, and proud his college now
Her highest laurels gathered for his brow.

And still in Arthur's footsteps would he go.

(A loyal champion to the bar he went
To prove the guilty, free the innocent,
And right the wronged with keen-edged argument.
No pettifogger he, to twist his pleas,
The better cause sell for the better fees,
And speak on either side with equal ease.
His parchment as a banner he unfurled
To fight Truth's battles in a guileful world.
Ill-fared the knave at whom his charge was hurled.)

And three years passed. No more, we hoped, to roam,
Our finished scholar to our welcoming home
Returned well-pleased, and to his boyhood's room.

It made Clare's dear old father almost gay,
 Although he said, as he would often say,
 That he "could better rise another day.
 (It saved the strength, sometimes, to lie in bed.)
 His pillow was so easy to his head
 That he could sleep perhaps, if Francis read."

(He ne'er was ill. It was "the heat," — "the cold." —
 "There was a difference 'twixt the young and old
 That must be felt, but never could be told.")
 And oft again among us he was seen
 In his old corner of the Canton screen,
 Asleep or waking, — both alike, serene.

(There's much that's touching in the meek content
 Of such old age, — so helpless, — innocent, —
 So little, and that little almost spent,
 To make contentment out of, — and withal
 Averse to any change that might befall,
 Yet doomed to make the greatest change of all.)

And, as he came to need us more and more,
 We loved him ever dearer than before
 It seemed, save Clare who could not. Softly o'er
 His brain his slumbers deepened, — longer stayed, —
 Till we, not he, began to be afraid.
 Physicians duly came, — brought little aid:

"His life was wearing out, as without pain,
 Almost without disease. The lamp again
Might flare up in the socket, — still in vain."

My dear ones watched him like twin seraphim.
 Clare, while he slept, wept till her eyes were dim,
 But, when he waked, had only smiles for him.
 The end is always sudden when 't is come.

There came a day when answering smiles were dumb
And frozen on pale lips to kisses numb.

That was a week ago. It seems a year, —
Seems long since morning even. I was here,
With noiseless steps to spare poor Clara's ear,
(Who slept ; for Grief turns morning into night,)
Letting into his vacant room the light,
And putting mournful tokens out of sight
Ere she should mark them, with a tender stealth, —
The rest arranging as in days of health,
Keys to unlock dear Memory's store of wealth, —
The gold-rimmed glasses in the Bible laid,
The easy-chair with furs and *Afghan* spread,
The silver bell that called her to his aid,
The vase of flowers beside it on the stand,
And box of sweets that used to court his hand, —
And kindling on the hearth each late-quenched brand ;
When I was told, although I had desired
No guests admitted ere a month expired,
That one had entered, who for Clare inquired.

Her father's sister 't was, whom naught could daunt, —
A somewhat strident dame, both drear and gaunt.
Clare, hating no one, strove to love her aunt.

I winced, but went myself to bear the brunt
Of sobs and sighs, with a resignèd front ;
And soon she pushed her queries at her wont,
Which as I might, I answered patiently :

“ He left his all to Clare, and Clare to me,
With some requests, which soon fulfilled will be.”

"Now brother's gone, Frank can't live on with you? —
Unmarried girls, you know, and only two! —
People would talk, you know! 'T would never do."

I stopped her down-drawn mouth with tea and cake,
And did not say, "A third then, Miss, pray make;"
But none the less her words had left their ache.

For when I thought on it, myself saw too
The risk so bluntly put to me was true;
The prating world might prate of us. I knew, —
Unless the tie of blood exists between, —
That world, in souls 'twixt sixty and sixteen,
Holds that attachment only love can mean.

Yet, oh, how could I banish now "my boy,"
In grief our comfort, as in joy a joy? —
Or what devised excuse with him employ,
If I must needs announce to him his doom, —
So undeserved and strange, — in all its gloom,
To leave my changed, inhospitable home? —

One seeming pearl next found I, left among
The toads that hopped from her departing tongue:
"Could any one — could Francis, — think *me* 'young'? —
Could Youth from me be not yet wholly flown?
How little of its sweetness had I known? —
Might he without reproach be still my own
In any way?" Still Fancy wove her web:
"Might heaven assign to me, although bereft
Of Arthur, all of Arthur that was left? —
So strangely cool towards others, for my sake,
Could Frank have kept himself, yet dared not speak
To claim the only tie Life cannot break?
And could he be — *he*, formed to win and shine, —

With unimpassioned tenderness like mine
Content, if he *should* speak, and I incline
To grant his suit?"

While, blushing, thus I mused
Twixt thoughts and feelings new and old, confused,
My Clara came on me, not as she used
With gentle confidence and easy grace,
But stealing from behind, and hid her face
Upon my shoulder, meeting my embrace,
And, while I clasped her there to weep her fill,
Murmured, "Dear Francis will be with me still,
And *be* — your brother, Ellen, if you will!" —

I kissed her many times and then said, "Go,
My love, and tell him I *would* have it so."
Then — I was left to battle with my woe.

For now it all comes back, — the old, old pain! —
And I can't find my little boy again, —
On earth, — in heaven, — I look for him in vain, —
The cherub that arose from Arthur's grave!

Now all is lost but honour, — *that* I have
From him, her, and myself; — and *that* I'll save;
For now at last I dearly am free
For the once longed-for lands beyond the sea;
And there I'll hide the pangs I cannot flee.
The happiness I may not share, at least
I will not mar. A skeleton at a feast
May scare the guests, — scarce find its fast appeased.

Now I have none that I can call my own,
Save in some graves o'er which the grass has grown;

And no one needs me, — none will miss me, — none !
My charges are each other's now, not mine ! —

In my own home their bliss will I enshrine,
Then dumb depart. They shall not see me pine,
Nor learn from me how keen that woe, — the worst,
With which a thirsty, hungry heart is cursed, —
To be the second where one was the first, —
To stoop beneath where others sit full-fed,
And gather up their scant-dropped crumbs for bread,
Or hover lonely round their arm-linked tread ! —

Had he in very deed been born my son,
I might have borne to do what I have done,
And given him up unto another one
And smiling by him at the altar stood,
Well-broken to a self-forgetful mood. —

The sacrificial oil of motherhood
Was never poured upon my brow untamed.
Nor are there any left with my name named,
By whom a mutual pity may be claimed
And given in common loss ; there 's none to say,
“ At our shrunk board, come sit by me to-day,
The nearer for the one that 's gone away.” . . .

Like hearse and coaches when the funeral 's done,
My empty, aimless days together run ;
What part have they or I beneath the sun ? . . .

My life 's a buried city. Over all,
From my soul's blackness, dust and ashes fall ;
And through them vainly on the ghosts, I call. . . .

From others' joy, — my woe, — I 'll hide mine eye ;
But, when my wretched years have all crawled by,
Perhaps return to them at last, to die.

PART II. — THE AFTERPIECE.

At theatres when the tragedy is o'er,
 Some hearers say that they can bear no more,
 And hurry to their coaches at the door,
 With humid handkerchiefs and eyes of rain,
 But leave behind them others who would fain
 Be into *every-day* let down again
 By means of some more tranquil afterpiece ;
 Although there should be little charm in this,
 Save that of contrast with past dismalness.

Let those who love but tragedy lay down
 Their tickets here and go ; because my own
 Is over, and I hope to take in none
 A part, hereafter, as chief actress. Full
 Life's play is now of acts and scenes to lull
 My past, but to the boxes may look dull.

I travelled for some years in search of peace.
 Enough ! Who does not know, in times like these
 Life's interests interest not, nor pleasures please ?
 But let none say, howe'er at odds with Fate,
 " My life is wretched *all*, and desolate ! "

For most lead many lives between the date
 Of birth and death ; and when, before us we
 Upon the long blank road no good can see,
 Some ambushed good may *round the corner* be, —
 Nay, must, if we are carrying out God's plans.
 Life's Gordian knot scarcely for every man 's
 Softly untied by usual circumstance, —

Still less for every woman ; yet it may
 Be cut by others oft in many a way,
 Though the sword's hilt the wielding palm should flay.

For years I prayed that God my wounds would heal ;
 For, though I heard no answer, I could feel
 That better than to grovel, is to kneel.

At last, I think, my tarrying answer came.
 The sun went down to set the Alps aflame.
 I left a *pension* dull, and circle tame ;
 (The neighbourhood was safe ; I only bade
 To follow me my former nurse, my maid ;)
 And slowly up a mountain-path I strayed ;
 And at a cross's foot, I sat me down,
 With mosses and gray lichens overgrown,
 By dead men's hands wrought long ago in stone.

I heard a noise as of sob-broken cries.
 With sun-tanned, leathern face and haggard eyes,
 A woman up a pass did on me rise, —
 A peasant-woman plucking at the hair,
 That scantily thatched her head both hoar and bare
 Of gear ; but when she saw me sitting there
 She clapped her hand upon her mouth and stayed
 Its din, and stood at gaze like one afraid
 To speak or not to speak.

I asked if aid
 Of mine could reach her grief.

Anew her wail
 Broke forth perforce. She strove to tell her tale,
 And I to understand : “ Some dreadful ail
 Had seized her daughter. All the livelong day
 She 'd walked to fetch a doctor, leagues away.

He would not come ; because she could not pay ! ”

“ Was there none nearer ? ”

“ No one in the place. ”

I turned and, to my maid, explained the case ;
A thought broke through the pity in her face :

“ There ’s near a student, just from Zürich, who
Perhaps could come and tell me what to do.
She is a young real lady, Miss, like you,
From our own country. For her I will go,
If you will spare me. ’T is but a stone’s throw
Beyond your door. I ’ll leave you safe there. ”

“ No, ”

I answered, “ I am coming with you both. ”

The “ sweet girl graduate ” joined us nothing loath.
A girl still, in the freshness of her youth,
Its modesty, and hope, and energy,
A woman, in her tender wisdom, she —
Nay, an *un-nimbus’d* saint, — appeared to me
Fit to work miracles ; and such she wrought
With gracious skill, within the wretched cot
Where Death with Life for a young mother fought.

That night I did not for my own woes weep,
But watched to purpose, if I could not sleep,
A pining baby on my knees to keep
While dozed its worn-out grandame, and to strive
With warmth and food to keep it still alive,
Lest the poor mother childless should survive.

Ere long, they both were saved. My inward pain,
Allayed, confessed that no life is in vain
Which, e’en through woe, doth life for others gain.
It seemed I heard a voice within me say,

"This for thee also is the appointed way.
Walk thou henceforth herein from night to day."
The saint, who of my story nothing knew,
Had ere her blessed presence she withdrew,
As with her passing shadow, healed me too,
Unwitting of that work. We went our ways
Henceforth again to run our separate race,
And see on earth no more each other's face.

(Ah me ! The storm, the ocean, and the wreck ! —
The fair young form, upon a sinking deck,
That knelt in prayer while billows round it brake ! —
The smiling corse, which lay upon the sand
With look so sweet that, on a foreign strand,
'T was strown with flowers by strangers of the land !)

In haste to play in life a living part,
Henceforth with all my strength and mind and heart
I strove to make my own the healing art, —
Still so far dead as not to hope or fear
Earth's praise or blame. The sarcasm or the sneer
Fell down as lightly through my eye or ear
As, 'neath the exhausting air-pump, doth the ball
Down through the still receiver noiseless fall.
Grief's freedwoman, I passed unchecked through all
Straight towards my end.

Nor did I aught abate,
In dress or service, of my usual state, —
Though simple, seemly. — Knowing wealth has weight,
When deeds and doers both are to be weighed
In public judgment's scales, I spurned no aid
That my new calling honourable made
In other women in the public view.

And soon I found the worth of all I knew,
Or tried to know before ; for often Youth
In aimless study very strangely doth,
For needs to come, store power and knowledge both.

Led by a purpose now, where'er I went
I found a welcome and a deep content,
And gladly pitched and sadly struck my tent.
Some iron doors were oped with golden keys,
And many more with golden kindnesses
By those who kept them, when they heard my pleas.
I loved the college well, but better still
The hospital, — an awful store of ill
Turned into good with ever-growing skill. —
Nor did my footsteps through it hurrying go
Only to *be* gone. There was much to know,
And more to comfort, in each white-bed row.

When my diploma was no longer new
My pressing letters still more pressing grew, —
More strongly ever on my heart-strings drew :
“Come back,” from o'er the sea my Francis said,
“To see what happiness yourself have made
And make it perfect. From us you have strayed
Too long and strangely.” As in days of yore
Clare “wanted me at home ;” and o'er and o'er
She poured into my yearning heart her store
Of nursery news to tempt me, — not in vain :
“Your little name-sake says, — she says it *plain*, —
'When *will* Nell's dear Aunt Nelly come again ?' —
Dear Francis hopes that Arthur's eyes and brow

And mouth are like his uncle's. You will know,
 And you must come and see, and tell us so. —
 Poor baby Charles, — he never had his share
 Of bloom. We 're anxious, — can no longer bear
 That he should want your tender, skilful care." —
 "We will not put your ear-drums to the proof,
 But take a dwelling not too far aloof, —
 Almost within the shadow of your roof."

My teachers cried, "Why linger in the rear?
 Go forth full-armed; — our sick will miss you here; —
 But go; and *do*, — with caution, — without fear."

And lo, the load, that I had walked beneath
 So long, was fallen! I felt with freer breath,
 One cruel nerve had ached itself to death!

So I came "home to die," but first to live, —
 With a not crushed, but chastened, heart to strive,
 Receiving freely, freely so to give, —
 Not only bear, but love, the will of God
 And seek to do, — (o'er my tear-watered sod
 Blossoms the rod I kissed, like Aaron's rod,) —
 To taste the calm that steals upon the lone
 When selfish hopes and fears are nigh outgrown,
 And Man is served for God's sake, — not our own.

I scarcely sought a crowded life nor fame,
 But time to do my best. A bruited name
 Were dearly bought at cost of higher aim.

The welcome sun now lights me from my door
 To heal the souls and bodies of the poor, —
 And ease their lingering ails that none may cure,

For whom the crowded hospital no room, —
The hurried doctor has no time, — whose doom
Leads down to death through deepening pain and gloom.
Scarce dare I dogmas touch ; I by them stand
With but the simple gospels in my hand, —
The sweet “ good news ” of far Judea’s land, —
To hungering ears, the mouth-piece fain to be
Of words the Saviour spake in Bethany,
Nain, and Jerusalem, and on Calvary.

The morn is all too short ; but when at noon
I reach my home, I find it none too soon
For women who have come to crave the boon
Of woman’s counsel, and who watch and wait, —
In *fortune*, than the first, more fortunate, —
More hapless, often, in their inward state.
I give them counsels, medicines, and — more dear
To sufferers oft — a patient, pitying ear.
They seek me more and more from far and near.

Next comes my favourite horse, — my rushing ride,
With Clare or Francis often at my side ;
In talk we join our joys and cares divide.
(My sleeping beauty grandly now awake, —
Awaked by Love and Life, — doth on her take
Our mother’s likeness, — dearer for her sake.)
Not far, but fast, we go.

The vesper-bell
Soon rings me back, in my old place to tell
My thanks to Him Who doeth all things well.

My Clara’s nursery from the church I seek,
To sit with little arms around my neck,
And feel sweet little kisses on my cheek

Unkissed so long before. The hearth-fires dance ;
And small white feet upon the carpet prance ;
Small half-clad sprites through lights and shadows glance,
With shrieks of laughter when pursued and caught.
But when the last mock battle has been fought,
When the last pigmy warrior has been brought
To terms, and tiny prayer and hymn are said,
When curly heads are on their pillows laid
With drowsy lids, in crib or truckle-bed,
And the last clinging hand lets go my dress,
I turn away, but not in dreariness.
The young "papa" will scarce, for any press
Of business, leave me to return alone.

(My "brother" now, unto the world he's known,
And but "in-law," but to our hearts, my son.)

Nor do I banish from my home the light
Of hospitable fires, or cheerful sight
And sound of looks and voices sweet and bright.
My dear ones twain beam often at my board
Amid their friends and mine ; and many a word,
More sparkling than the diamonds, then is heard.
(They bring to spend each yearly holiday
With me their little darlings all, to play
And fill my grave old house with accents gay.)
Or humbler guests around me smile and dine,
Who scarce may see how festal candles shine
On flowers and fruit 'neath any roof but mine.

But best of all, perhaps, when night is come
I love the wonted quiet of my home, —
The bright, warm quiet of a book-lined room
Both sociable and still. Then *Scott's* let in ;

He barks, bounds, wags, and fawns with joyous din, —
 Then "makes my foot warm" with his shaggy chin,
 And on that pillow sleeps. Old volumes' lore
 And new, for others' weal I now explore,
 And think and pray their sufferings' mysteries o'er, —
 Then think how mine are over, in amaze.

For I have learned my God to thank and praise
 For what I held the curse of length of days;
 And most of all I thank Him still for this:
 That, when I groped along a precipice,
 He let me not fall down to sacrifice
 Myself and others dearer, — (for I know
 Them capable, if I'd have had it so,
 Of changing natural bliss for life-long woe, —
 Know, had I let them thus their own destroy,
 It could have brought me but a mock of joy, —
 A waning woman wedded with a boy!)

Fast — when God wills, — but never stoop to feed
 On husks, like prodigals — or swine! The bread
 Of heaven, His angels still can bring at need.
 Content with blessedness instead of bliss,
 I look to what I have from what I miss,
 Or to the *shall be*, from the thing that *is*.

Such hours in peace and comfort fly too fast.
 The stingless bees of Memory from the past
 Bring in its honey and, not least or last,
 Sweet thoughts of other hearths that, by my means,
 My God hath deigned to brighten, — and still deigns, —
 With hope and health, where humbler Plenty reigns.

Upon my knees last I tell off the day
 As one more bead of a rich rosary

That, ere I go to sleep, I have to say.
And neither would I cling to mortal breath,
Nor choose to take unearned the boon of death.

The same Love rules above and underneath.
I think, though Life is good, that Death is best,
Yet would have all my work done ere I rest,
And wear Earth's spoils upon my heavenly crest,
And win some honours for my Arthur's sake
Ere, at his side, in peace my place I take
In glory everlasting to awake.

I know that I shall duly, by and by,
Have loving hearts around me when I die
And leave them memories dear, — no agony.

Meantime among my nephews may I see, —
Some time, — some little Knightley who shall be —
Almost — what little Frank was once to me.

POEMS
OF
THE WAR OF THE REBELLION.

"With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." — ABRAHAM LINCOLN, *President of the United States of America.*

FANEUIL HALL.

—“When, not many furlongs off from the old ‘Cradle of Liberty,’ a Boston Court-house was turned into a slave-pen, and when our once high-hearted old town, half re-ennobled . . . by her too late-roused indignation, sat shaking in the dust in chains of her elder sons’ forging, while her younger ones, marching in arms round about her, pointed their weapons at her heart to keep down her impotent rising.” — *“Herman ; or, Young Knighthood.”*

εἰ γὰρ τόδ' ἔσται . . . ,
οὐκ οἶδ' Ἀθήνας τάσδ' ἐλευθέρας ἔτι.
ἀλλ' οἶδ' ἐγὼ τὸ τῶνδε λῆμα καὶ φύσιν·
θνήσκειν θελήσουσ'· ἡ γὰρ αἰσχύνῃ πάρος
τοῦ ζῆν παρ' ἐσθλοῖς ἀνδράσιν νομίζεται.

EURIPIDES.

Ho, here, my sturdy brothers, from the forum or the forge
Come down as came your forefathers to blunt the tools of George !
More swiftly than their cart-horses from Concord's meadows far,
And the shores of sandy Plymouth, flies for you the panting car.
Leave your half-bought beeves uncheapened, and unsold your driven
flock,
And quench the match just lighted in the gray old granite rock.
Leave the wondering cod unbaited in the waters blue and still,
And hither steer your *dories* by the shaft of Bunker Hill.
Where Lexington's moist clover twinkles in the morning light,
And Dorchester's gay buttercups dance on her storied height,

Let your ploughs stick in the furrows, — smoke your hay-cocks in the sun ;

Here are fetters to unrivet ! Freedom's work is to be done !

With eager and with gallant hearts, obey the welcome call ;

For a suppliant cowers trembling 'neath the eaves of Faneuil Hall !

Rejoice, thou trembling fugitive. Were hell-hounds on thy track,
Ne'er from these sacred precincts had they power to drag thee back.

Our three-hilled city owns no rule, save that of equal laws.

Approach her grand tribunal, and securely plead thy cause. —

What ! — Why ? — Condemn the guiltless ! Away with all your fears !

He asks but justice. Try him by a jury of our peers. —

There is no room for them. The court with Slavery's slaves is filled.

Are you mad ? Speak low. Look round you. Be your reckless brawl-
ings stilled ;

For the shadows and the footsteps of hireling soldiers fall

On shackled Justice' threshold, in the shade of Faneuil Hall !

Rejoice thee yet, thou fugitive ! Behold these free-born bands.

The swords of patriot ancestors are gleaming in their hands ;

And heroes' blood, that throbbed of old for Freedom and the right,

Thrills in their veins ; and tyrants shall fly quaking at the sight,

And leave thee free as heaven's own air around yon hallowed wall,

In Freedom's oracles of yore breathed forth from Faneuil Hall ! —

Hope not in them, poor fellow-slave ; their aid is not for thee.

The steel they bear, as chains they wear, — the chains of Tyranny !

Fall back, ye hapless recreants, — into your grandsires' graves ;

Their clapboard ribs, if empty now, ne'er held the hearts of slaves !

Go, with your snorings wake them from their rest well-earned and deep ;

For Liberty's old Cradle has rocked half their young to sleep.

Oh monument of Glory dead, to shapeless ruin fall,

Nor mock us with thy memories, polluted Faneuil Hall ! —

Farewell, our country's cuckoo-brood, — the brood of Sloth and Gold.

Our country's true-born, to the front ! Her cobwebbed flags unfold.
O God of love, unserved too long, with changing mien art Thou,
The awful " God of Battles," our only helper now ?
Leap forth then, clad with lightnings, from the black and bellowing cloud.
With Thy forgotten thunders appal the craven crowd.
Our lives, — our youth, — our manhood, — we immolate to Thee.
Take all, dread God ; but save our sons our birthright, Liberty.
As the seed of better ages, our martyred forms shall fall.
Our names shall be the household words, for aye, of Faneuil Hall.
In Thine unerring balance, our wavering counsels weigh
For strife or peace, O God of grace, this dark and evil day.
Be Thou our Light, — our Leader. Prompt Thou our unlearned parts.
We are men and blind and erring, but with brave and loyal hearts.
Choose Thou the way. We follow by the green or crimson path,
Through the lanes of Peace and Plenty or the fire-sown road of Wrath.
As Freedom's champions let us live, her stainless champions die,
And in our blest and honoured graves in happy slumbers lie,
Where through the stillness e'en of death 't will reach our half-roused ear,
When Freedom's voice is raised once more and shouting freemen hear
As he, who to her threshold fled, a fearful chattel thrall,
Hangs up his broken fetters o'er the gates of Faneuil Hall.

"MASSACHUSETTS SOLDIERS DEAD IN BALTIMORE."

"I pray you to cause the bodies of our Massachusetts soldiers dead in Baltimore to be immediately . . . tenderly sent forward . . . to me." — *The Governor of Massachusetts to the Mayor of Baltimore, April 19th, 1861.*

"SEND them back tenderly," —

Hardy young men

Who left us but yesterday ! —

"Tenderly" back again

"Send them" to-morrow.

Their young feet never more

Shall march on field or floor,

That marched so gallantly !

Those in their joy who went,

Proud to defend us,

Back to our sorrow

Tenderly send us.

"Send them back tenderly,"

Traitors, at least,

Who use guests so murderously,

Use victims tenderly,

Traitor, not beast !

Send them for shame,
For your glory who came.
Slain by no foreign foe,
'T was treason laid them low.

You have your countrymen,
On their own highway, slain !
They for your country died.
Quick, — ere their blood has cried
Out of your ground,
Send them back, — tenderly, —
Lest from each gaping wound
It oozes afresh at your presence to tell
What you did, to shut heaven and opening hell !

Send them back tenderly,
Kind neighbours, who deplore
Our Massachusetts soldiers
Dead in Baltimore, —
Ye who would afford,
Your mourning dwellings nigh,
A shelter for the dead
Who, living, were betrayed
By inmates that have made
Your fair town's once fair name
A hissing, and a word
For Perfidy and Shame
To call each other by, —
Ye who would atone,
By every sacred rite,
For wrongs ye wanted might

To hinder, — we alone
Their last sad rites must do :
'T is theirs, and 't is our due.
To you we sent our living ;
Send us back our dead.
You 're grieving, we forgiving ;
And yet the free and brave old State
That saw their boyhood's sports, and reared
Their vigorous youth, and sent of late
Their valiant manhood forth, to do
Its best for Freedom, her, and you,
Must make their last low bed.
Unto its native dust
Must this brave dust return ;
For o'er its sacred urn
The phoenix Liberty shall burn
And soar new-born ; and they who sow
A martyr's ashes, straight behold
Heroes spring up an hundredfold
To guard the hallowed soil around, —
A harvest meet for holy ground ; —
Send them to heal our common wound.

Bring them back tenderly,
Who marched hence so gallantly,
The envy of the shouting crowd,
With head aloft and bearing proud,
And fife and drum and tramp and cheer, —
To meet the death that stood so near, —
While o'er them high their banner flew
To mix its stars with heaven's bright blue.

Now be the fife and drum
And brass-lipped cymbals dumb ;
And let the ways, with awe-struck mourners filled,
Be hushed and stilled.
But let the unearthly organ blow,
Solemn and slow, a dull dead march
For the corpses as they go
Through the sepulchre's low arch ;
And let the striped and spangled flag,
That late they bore on high,
Then died beside, — their fitting pall, —
Upon the coffins lie ;
For over land and sea
Its triumphs shall no more
Make glad the patriot three
Laid dead in Baltimore.

But the Christian saith,
" Where is thy victory, Death ? "
And those, in righteousness and faith,
Who their brave lives lay down before
Their country and the right,
Defeat and death know never more.
Their monuments have might
Greater than e'en their swords.
Upon their silent graves
Each blade of grass that waves,
In the soft summer breezes, is a tongue
That utters stirring words ;
And in the strife, Time-long,
Of Right with hydra Wrong,

One hero's death outweighs
A thousand lingering lives of traitors base.

Not despairing, — not in gloom, —
Can we turn from this grand tomb.
Now again let martial shout,
Cymbal and trump ring out.
With redoubled heart we go
To put down their murderous foe.
Until our lives the work have done,
Now by their gallant deaths begun, —
Until their glorious standard
Triumphantly shall wave
From ocean unto ocean,
O'er the loyal, free, and brave, —
Men and women, strive and pray, —
Till the Moloch is no more,
That slew the friendly guests
In the streets of Baltimore.

RED, WHITE, AND BLUE.

FROM the threshold the soldier-boy turned him to go,
Heavy-hearted though stanch, to encounter the foe ;
Northward he turned. From the very same place
His brother and comrade set southward his face ;
But his face o'er his shoulder anon looked his hate :
" Farewell, traitor," he cried, " to your own native State !"
The boy stopped. The taunt set his blood all astir :
" While loyal was she, I was loyal to her ;
A recreant State, it is no State for me ;
I stand by my country, whoever may flee.

If a traitor be nigh,
I think 't is not I."

Then tears quenched the lightning that flashed in his eye :
" Bid our mother good-bye. If her letter was cold,
Or stern, say that still I loved her as of old
But, cherished or outcast, I could but be true
To the oaths I had sworn, — to the Red, White, and Blue."

" Then cross not my path !
Heaven's thunder and wrath
Go with you, where'er
Your treason you bear,
And with me, if we meet in the field, but I 'll tear —

Though your whole North crowd round us to part me and you, —
From your dastardly keeping, your Red, White, and Blue ! ”

He swore and he cursed.
“ If you will, do your worst ;
You wake small alarm ;
Not weak is my arm ;

God grant that it never my brother may harm.
I shrink not from death when this life is so sore,
But ’t were best for us both if we never met more ;
For, living or dying, I can but be true
To our soldierly oaths, — to the Red, White, and Blue.”

At midnight, the rebel rode home from the fight.
“ Are you safe ? ” “ Yes.” “ What news ? ” “ We have conquered
to-night,
In a skirmish. To-morrow, — I know not, — they say
The enemy ’s pouring in masses this way.
No matter ; — here ’s sport. When their ensign we shot,
I saw a young officer dart to the spot,
And snatch up the banner. He swallowed my lead
In his turn ; but the pestilent caitiff, if dead,
Still stuck to his colours. See here.” With a laugh,
He showed a pale hand that still clung round the staff :
“ Spite of all that in life and in death he could do,
From the Yankee I ’ve parted his Red, White, and Blue ! ”

“ Now God, who looked on,
Forgive you, my son,
But this is a pitiless deed you have done.
To the death ” — to the rebel his mother she said, —

"War on with the living ; war not with the dead.
'T was enough for the stripling to perish alone.
Poor hand ! Look ! 'T is almost as small as my own,
That so often at bedtimes in blessing I 've laid
On your, and your far-away brother's young head.
I was cruel to curse him. Oh, where is he now ?
Shall I ever press more these harsh lips to his brow ? —
This standard was worthless to me and to you ;
Why not leave to the poor corse its Red, White, and Blue ? "

On his bed tossed the rebel, and sprang with a start
From a dream of a hand that lay cold on his heart.
"Fetch a spade," — with his foot, as he passed through the door,
He stirred up the negro that slept on the floor, —
"To the Yankee I 'll give, — give the devil his due, —
A grave in return for his Red, White, and Blue."

Through the corpses, while Darkness was struggling with Light,
They stumbled and groped o'er the field of the fight.

As the Dawn kissed the Dew,
His brother he knew.
There was no speech nor breath ;
But the boy smiled in death ;
Like no victim despoiled, — like a victor, — he lay,
Where he lay all alone
With one gallant hand gone.

O'er the still heart they parted the blue coat away.
The cold snowy bosom, the blood had gushed through.
He still bore his colours, — the Red, White, and Blue !

THE FORSAKEN SOLDIER; OR, WHERE WAS THE
AMBULANCE?

“HURRAH, boys! It's almost over now.
Hark, — nothing but scattering shots.
Now they'll have picked up the rearward men,
And make for these foremost spots.
If my leg and arm both were n't broken, — bad luck! —
I'd manage to creep or roll
To see them coming, and give three cheers,
There from that nearest knoll. —
Where can the ambulance be?

“Take heart. After every well-fought field
Brave men must be 'faint and sore.'
'Don't I feel any pain?' A little perhaps, —
Perhaps a little or more.
We've given too many hard knocks to-day,
The softest of knocks to take;
But would n't we bear ten times our share
For the country and Freedom's sake? —
Where can the ambulance be?

“If we have to wait till it gets pretty late,
The sun sets clear and bright;

And if they don't come till after it's down,
 You know there's a moon to-night;
 And if they don't find us till morning dawns,
 At least we shall have the dew. . . .
 Who sobbed in the dark? Why, drummer-boy Sam!
 What have they done to you? —
 Where *can* the ambulance be?

"Poor little chap, 'It bleeds,' he says!
 Pull the handkerchief off my arm. —
 'The air will make it smart,' a bit? —
 Let it then; where's the harm?
 Crawl over to me, Sam; here I am.
 Take hold, Tom, with me; and tie. —
 There, — sleep with me, Sammy; I'll keep you warm;
 And the stars sha'n't 'prick your eye.' —
 Where can the ambulance be?

"I dreamt they were watering horses then
 At the well by father's door.
 Somebody else should have had his turn,
 If I'd dozed for a minute more.
 But half a night now is all that's left.
 No doubt by this time to-morrow
 We shall have good drinks to our hearts' content, —
 And bad ones, too, to our sorrow. —
 Where can the ambulance be?

"When once we're stowed on the hospital shelves,
 It would n't be strange if there
 Was mother's own writing on jellies and jams;
 And then I should n't much care

If you took all the inside of the jars,
 If the labels you 'd save for her son.
 She dried all her apples for us last year ;
 Little Bobby would eat but one. —
 Where can that ambulance be?

.
 "Speak lower ; this boy is sound asleep.
 Why, Sammy ! — He don't look right ! —
 Talk on, if you like ; you won't wake *him*.
 The child has died in the night.
 I can't well stir myself nor him ;
 And I hope that they 'll be here soon ;
 For the chill of his death strikes all through me.
 But the sun will be hot at noon. —
 Where can the ambulance be?

.
 "Of course they 'll bring casks full of water, Jim ? —
 What 's that you are eating ? — 'Grass' ? —
 Put some into my mouth, — I can't move my hand, —
 It will help the time to pass.
 Beasts live on it ; could n't a man then, — think ? —
 If he had to, — a day more, — two ? —
 They will find us soon. We must give them time.
 They are few with much to do.
 Where can the ambulance be?

.
 "They can't mean to march and leave us here !
 How long ago was the fight ? —
 What, only 'four days' ? Fourteen at least ! —
 Forgive me ; perhaps you 're right.

I would n't be cross if a cloud could rain, —
One of those clouds from home, —
And moisten our tongues and slake our wounds,
Just till the doctors come. —
Where can the ambulance be?

.
“Don't swear, Jim, don't! They're coming there! Hark! —
Was it only 'the wind in the trees'?
Well, we can't spare God, if all beside
Forsake us in times like these.
He's closer far than our brothers are.
Don't let us drive Him away.
While we've breath enough for cursing left,
We've breath enough to pray. —
Where can the ambulance be?

“Let's keep asleep till we hear it near.
My eyes are drowsy and dim. . . .
Halloo, what a light! Is it lanterns? No;
Sunshine. How are you? — JIM! —
Jim, too! And he's the last of them all;
And his last word is said! —
So now there's no use in my talking, — none;
But the stillness sounds so dead. —
Where can the ambulance be?

.
“I think my soul is striking its tent;
For like fire that's almost out
It seems, now here and then elsewhere, —
Flickers and flies about.

Just now 't was up in the Congress Hall ;
And it heard them speak and say,
They 'd put the bill for the Ambulance Corps
Off to a future day. —
Where can the ambulance be ?

“ Is there any ‘ future day ’ for me
On earth ? I forgive my foes,
That fought with us who fought with them,
Easier than friends like those
That we fought for, — that leave me here to die ! —
Those words were worse than the shot.
But Father, forgive — forgive them, — they —
They don't know what — they do not — .”
Where *could* the ambulance be ?

IN TENEBRIS.

'Tis an eve of black horror ; I stand all alone
And hear down below a grim sea make its moan, —
Like a tiger that, starving, for victims doth range, —
Rush, roar, and recoil in re-iterant change.
I hear it, — see not. By the pitiless beat,
My window is blinded, of snow and of sleet ;
And straining to pierce it the prisoner eye,
Of comfort and fellowship, nought can espy
Save the twinkle afar of a taper's dim light
Where a Sister of Charity wears out the night
Beside a sick woman, — in watching and prayer, —
Whose impenitent spirit is called to repair
To the judgment by morning.

I would that my soul
Could so shroud her windows, nor see the clouds roll
And lighten o'er hell, while the cannon's black mouth
Speaks sentence of death to the traitorous South,
Where raging to slay, hand to hand, — face to face, —
Fierce foemen are set, of one land, of one race,
One faith, and one baptism !

No more ! Let me turn
To the hearthstone to muse ; where the embers still burn, —
None too brightly to-night, — and their fire scarce looks warm
For the sound all around of the horrible storm.

They flicker and fade ; and their quick, fitful flashes
Are soon veiled and smothered and quenched in their ashes,
As Man's youth, by Man's age and Man's death. When and where
A people went mad, thus a queen's golden hair
On a night turned to silver.

The sparks come forth, fly

Into blackness, as Man into trouble, and die.
On the mantel, I see, of the low-lighted room, —
Oft seeming to move in the gleam and the gloom,
And warn me with gestures, — some forms ghastly pale
That, endlessly struggling, shall never prevail.
Through all time in a breathless, white wrestling with Fate, —
Vainly loving and brave, — vainly mighty and great, —
Laocoön fights for himself and each son ;
And, opposite, Sisyphus heaveth his stone
Up the sharp craggy steep which he climbeth in vain,
Nor touches its top but to bound back again, —
Like a mortal, mortality's load who doth bear
To the summit of fame, and is seen near and far,
But to reel thence anon while men marvel and scoff :
“ How high does he stand ! ” — “ Lo, how far fallen off ! ”
Above them no more I the Christ can descry ;
Serene on his cross now he hangeth too high
With his thorns and his halo.

Amen ; I have seen

If I see him not now. That shall be which hath been.
What needs there to follow through sorrow and strife
The faithless and godless, who grapple with Life
In the dark, single-handed ?

Nay, why fall below

All high-hearted heathens, who lived long ago

And fought all our ills and some worse of their own,
 And heard through their warfare, still marching them down,
 The dread tread of Moira?

In days to the soul

As like unto nights as the days of the pole, —
 When Failure did baffle and Death did bereave,
 And the most Faith could do was, to try to believe ;
 When Hope still looked but like a fool or a cheat ;
 Life, oft a forced march, made with numb, aching feet,
 In the teeth of the Northwind ; and Death like an end, —
 Instead of beginning, — where all things did tend
 To ruin together ; and Virtue, a name
 Of a theory open to question and blame ;
 And Duty, mere pleasing of king or of state ;
 And Conscience, a whim ; and Religion, its mate,
 The worship of fiends and the practice of sin ; —
 They trimmed the dark-lantern God lighted within,
 And found their way heavenward through Satan's ranks serried,
 Ere yet to the rescue the Lord born and buried
 Stood up from the corpses.

To us he is born,

He hath taken upon him Man's state erst forlorn,
 Hath appeared to the women, his pinions hath furled
 To walk at our head to the end of the world, —
 While the guest-loving heavens, that brook small delay,
 Press thronging around him to meet us half-way, —
 And to us on life's billows hath tenderly said,
 " Let your hearts not be troubled " and, " Be not afraid."
 'T is ours in rapt moments to gaze on his smile,
 With Faith open-visioned. Anon for a while
 If our sight is oft holden by woe or by sin, —

The darkness without or the darkness within, —
Through the night and the tempest, the seaman beats on
In the course which he chose when his cup held the sun.

So on to our port let us steadfastly steer.

We know, though we see not, our pilot is near ;
And Conscience, the compass, is still on the deck ;
Heavy hearts oft make ballast, that hinders from wreck
Souls else most unstable ; and, when 't is God's will,
We shall hear o'er the breakers the words, " Peace ! Be still ! "
We shall see, while the clouds by that utterance are riven,
The glory to Christ that his Father hath given ;
We shall see it, enraptured forever to see,
Where he would that with him all his followers should be !

A FUNERAL. 1862.

Down in the rose-crowned earth's warm breast,
Lay the dear boy to his early rest, —
Morning-glories with nightshade strown
O'er the fair form whose work is done.
Sadly sing with a faltering tongue,
" Whom the gods love, they die — die young ! "
His country's sword on his coffin lay,
And the sash that his fingers yesterday
Knotted, — and warmed, — with their chill, stiff clay, —
That rose and fell with his eager breath,
As he smiling marched to his tryst with Death.
Light on such dust, the dust be thrown.
The sod is shut, and the stripling gone.

He is gone from a life that hath yielded him more
Than, to many another, his slow fourscore :
A generous stock that to honour grows
As doth the rose's up to the rose ;
Generous nurture that crowns the man
Twice the king that mere nature can ;
Hopes that were high, and not in vain ;
The strength of limb with the strength of brain ;
Manful toil with a child's frank mirth ;
The hearse kept far aloof from the hearth ;
Love that no doubt nor change e'er knew ;

Chaplets of bays won ere chaplet of yew,
In the gentle lists of the muses won, —
Bays by a mother smiled upon ; —
In a country worth dying for, gone from a life
Nobly laid down in a glorious strife.

He is gone with a memory lifted bright
To shine like a star in the past's long night ;
(Slander, that older fame makes dim,
Had not had time to breathe on him ;)
With a soul unlost in the tangled maze
And the crossing paths of earthly days ;
And a courage, as long his mates shall tell,
That did not fall when his deathstroke fell.

He is gone to a life as calm and deep
As the look that he wore when he sank to sleep, —
Gone to a life as pure and high
As the starry arch of the holy sky, —
The arch that upholdeth the sapphire floor
Meet for his feet forevermore.
Those innocent feet have climbed Jacob's stair.
Beneath rolls Earth with her rage, despair,
And blood of Abel and howl of Cain,
Where her hands can reach him never again.
Out of his ears, her clamour dies
In the everlasting harmonies.
Heroes and saints are his comrades now,
In whose steps he trod when he walked below.
His hope is a prophet whose word aye holds fast, —
His sorrow is naught but a dream of the past, —
Who, hallowed by Death, is by Death set free
To a life that is immortality.

GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER, 1863.

God of our Fathers, on their sons once more in mercy look,
And let our tears against our sins be written in Thy book !
Lo, Treason, Rage, and Carnage keep their orgies through the land ;
The vulture Ruin swoops ! My God, hold Thou Thine angel's hand !
For a passover of blood and death doth visit earth again.
Full many a door-post, sprinkled red ; and many a lamb is slain.

Yea, the Mater Dolorosa waileth all the country through
At the tomb of her young offspring, in whom Christ is slain anew.
In their warm and sheltered chambers, brides and maidens watch and
weep,

Or panting start with bristling locks from late and fitful sleep,
Whose spirits' ears do through the haunted stillness hear the flight
Of parting souls that hurry driven upwards through the night.
For many a crimson mountain-side and many a fatal plain
Are strown and heaped with lifeless forms of those who died in vain ;
Where dying eyes look patiently for aid that ne'er shall come,
And speechless lips are gasping for the gurgling brooks at home,
And wide-eyed corpses blankly stare up to the sky to see,
By star and sun and moonlight, where their missing spirits be.
At evening for the morn, we moan ; at morn, for noon ; and then
Darkness is over all the earth, and vain the help of men.

But to the tomb, our pilgrim thoughts now take their yearly road,
Of him who was the Son of Man and is the Son of God,

Without whose mild interpretations we could not understand, —
Too high for highest human ken, — the workings of Thine hand.
The holy time doth in his name embolden us to pray,
More closely pressing to Thy throne, “ *Take* Thou this cup away, —
Thou with Whom all is possible, — or if it be Thy will,
Until its lowest dregs are drained, that we must drink it still,
Then teach our hearts those words of might Thou gavest to Thy Son,
To sweeten all its bitterness, “ Thy will, not mine, be done ; ”
And let us learn, of him who now doth reign with Thee in heaven,
To take the chalice that to us is by our Father given,
To purge our sins away, from Thee too gently out to spill
A single blessing of them all, its mystic depths that fill.
Our lord who deigned to taste to us, therein most deeply quaffed
That we might know, whate’er the woe, no venom in the draught.
Not from the great Physician’s hands we clamour for release,
That we should rave and cry “ Peace, peace ! ” while yet there is no
peace ;
But faint the head, — the whole heart sick ; and oh, Jehovah, see
Already we begin to let our Israel go free !
Through our Red Sea Thou mak’st a path for them. To us, no more
Pursuing them, stretch forth Thine arm and bring us back to shore.
How long, O Lord ? Our stiff-necked past, unto us all forgive.
Still let us see Thy goodness in the land of those who live.
The sad disciples stray apart ; and early, long, and late,
Before the sealed sepulchre do saintly women wait.
The seasons in Thy counsels hid and kept in Thine own power,
’T is not for us to know or ask ; but in some blessed hour
Send down Thine angel on the road he learned of yore, to roll
The stone that buries Christ, away from every christened soul.
As in the body, on this day, of old he issued forth,
So let him in the spirit rise and stand to South and North,

Till on each other's necks they weep in mingled love and pain
For some by both held very dear, who come not back again,
Before Thee in the sight of all the nations making good
A bond that ne'er can broken be, sealed with their mutual blood ;
Till through our borders, sown with dead and mown by shell and sword,
A harvest rise of righteousness and glory to the Lord ;
Till every house a temple shall, and every chamber be
A sacred oratory, kept most holy unto Thee ;
And those within shine purified, but not consumed or lost,
Not only as by fire baptized, but by the Holy Ghost !
Beauty for ashes unto us, — for wrath, the Saviour send ;
And of his kingdom be no end on earth till earth shall end.

WELCOME HOME TO THE ARMY. 1865.

STREAM out, flag and pennon !
Peal bell, drum, and cannon !
From Death's choking jaws, back our warriors they come !
Fill up all the highways, —
Pour out through the by-ways, —
With shouts and hosannas to welcome them home ! —

Huzzas and hosannas ! —
From swamps and savannas,
From picket and battle-field, fortress and camp,
Black mines and red trenches
And faint, mortal stench,
Where the wounded all night saw the hospital-lamp !

When States were forsaken
By States they had taken
For better for worse, you espoused their woes ;
When Freedom was starving,
You would not be carving
A daintier thing than the strength of her foes ;

Our Union in anguish
'Mid robbers did languish, —
Your metals most precious were iron and lead !

Poor soldiers, to wealth now, —
Come, sick ones, to health now, —
From Libby, to love, — from Belle Isle, to be fed.

We wreathe with our posies
Of myrtle and roses
The laurels you bear ; and sad cypress we throw
For your comrades high-hearted
Forever departed, —
The flower of the land by Sedition laid low !

The dust Treason 's biting,
That forced you to fighting ;
And Washington, Marion, and Sumter to-day,
From the skies smiling o'er us,
Your stars watch before us,
And dare their spoiled children to tear them away.

Come, laden with blessings,
Secure to possessings
Of altars and hearths, brothers, husbands, and sires.
When your babes' babes are hoary
They 'll tell your old story
To the grandchildren climbing their knees by the fires !

JACK TURNER. 1882.

WE are "Columbia," the great and the free !
Hear our "spread eagle" flap o'er land and sea,
Stretching its wide, brooding wings round the earth,
Beckoning the down-trod to sit at our hearth,
Pole and Hungarian and Celt in their turn !
Who is offended, and we do not burn ?
Yes, we could weep for you, Theodor Körner. —
What shall we do now for homely Jack Turner ? —
Do ? — Why, his face was black ! Blacken his name !
Let not his memory lack loads of ill-fame ! —

Southward they call to us, See how droll ! — See
How such iniquitous wretches can be
Stubborn and dumb while the gallows and scourge,
To own their treachery, goad them and urge !
Torture we 've tried with one, doing our best ; —
Nor plot nor stratagem, have they confessed.
Such our humanity still that when he,
Jack, the arch-enemy, under the tree
Asked that unto him his dear wife might come
With a last kiss for him there, from his home,
We waited patiently some little while, —
Looking good-humouredly hence for a smile,

When such a travesty we should behold,
Of the fine history partings of old,
Hiding our mouths in a decent accord
As the black Lady Russell took leave of her lord, —
Waited for search to be made, some rods round ;
'T was not our fault if she could not be found.

Oh, " God of battles " ! And is it for this
That from our fire-sides our heroes we miss,
Who in libations to Freedom did pour
Freely their precious blood out in the war ?
Oh, God of judgments ! and thus do we pay
Those who stood fast on their side in the fray,
Like Sparta's Helots who, each with a crown
In Sparta's wars won, to darkness went down, —
Freed for a day for their prowess in fight,
Quietly murdered the following night ?
Weak in our clemency, — fools in our trust, —
Have we helped Tyranny up from the dust,
Pardoning its past as we pitied its pang ?
Has the scotched rattlesnake never a fang ?
Kindred of those with our kindred who died,
How can we help you ? Our hands we have tied.
Oh, North, South, East, and West, whose is the blame ?
Countrymen, countrymen, where is your shame ?

Victim who, ere you found peace 'neath the sod,
Called in your agony through Christ on God,
On your next trial when, grim, Satan stands
Under the judgment-seat, stretching his hands
Eager to seize his own, pressing each charge,

When your condemners no more are at large,
When in the no more deaf ears of the dead
The hardly heard before sentence is read,
“Blessed the merciful, for behold they
Shall obtain mercy!” then pray for them, pray, —
Not in the martyrs’ school vainly a learner, —
Pray for your enemies, soul of Jack Turner!

THE CHURCHYARD.

"I take the grasses of the grave
And make them pipes whereon to blow."
TENNYSON.

IN THE CHURCHYARD.

"They are all gone into the world of light,
And I alone sit ling'ring here."

HENRY VAUGHAN.

"In the churchyard dim, I sit
While the bats around me flit,
Far aloof from Life's gay hosts.
Very dreary, — very lonely, —
For my audience, I am only
Singing to the silent ghosts.

"Moan is made ; and prayer is said.
I am deader than the dead.
Oh, my loved ones, all gone home,
Are you gone from me forever?
Do you think upon me never?
Are you deaf as you are dumb?

"When the Grecian hero went,
By the enchantress Circe sent
Down to Hades' iron door,
Gore of sheep brought to him thronging
All the shades to him belonging.
Not my tears alone, I pour ;

THE CHURCHYARD.

"See, my piercèd heart a flood
For you of its own best blood,
Sheds within and sheds in vain.
Not one voice and not one vision
Comes for me from lands Elysian ;
None returns of all your train !

" 'T is as vain for me to strive
More to live with men alive ;
Grove my hands, but cannot *do*.
In unto your sheltered quiet,
Take me from this world's dull riot.
Let me be as still as you.

"Ye, who held your various lamps,
Through its labyrinths and damp,
Once to light this life of mine,
You have put them out and left me.
I am lost, since you were reft me,
In a black, mephitic mine.

"How shall eyes that cannot sleep, —
How shall eyes, that only weep, —
See earth's prizes more to find ?
'Land where all things are forgotten,'
Be henceforth my place allotten !
Let me be unseen as blind."

So I sang, and ceased and sat
Only hearing owl and bat
With my famished outward ears, —

There a whoop and here a flutter, —
Nor one longed-for word did utter,
One dear tongue of vanished years.

Yet I thought my bleeding heart
Did not all unmarked depart ;
Souls made answer unto soul.
When the moon rose shining faintly,
Like a spirit fair and saintly,
While the mists did round her roll,

And the stillness of the hour
Seemed from out the old church-tower
Softly breathed o'er graves and grass,
And the night-wind where it listed
Softly blew and softly rested, —
Like the Holy Ghost, did pass, —

To mine inner sense, my dead
Tenderly drew near and said,
“ Hast thou in our truth no trust? —
Truth through life, — to death, — approvèd?
What thou lov'dst in us, belovèd, —
That which loved thee, — was it dust?

“ Take the blessing of our calm
On thee. Go and find thy palm
Where it grows 'mid passion-flowers.
Be not rash to snatch the cerement.
Haste to weave thy wedding-garment ;
Fateful are the fleeting hours.

THE CHURCHYARD.

“ In the high and holy place
Where we view our Saviour's face,
Unreproached in peaceful state,
Doth our light no shadow borrow
Cast by any bygone sorrow ;
Crowned, we bless our crosses' weight.

“ But if ever we do grieve
'Tis, that somewhat we did leave
Undone, which we might have done, —
That somewhere earth's children languish
'Neath the burden of an anguish,
We could reach beneath the sun.

“ Happier thou in this than we ;
For the poor old world may be,
Still, the better for thy stay, —
Sweeter for thy living in it.
Use thereto each counted minute ;
Make thy mark on it for aye.

“ Then the time will not be long
Ere thou join'st the angels' song.
With a hallowed heart and mind
Wait thy summons, not unwilling, —
For our sake with speed fulfilling
Service that we left behind.”

ARA, IN YOUR EARLY TOMB.

DECEMBER 25th, 1873.

ARA, in your early tomb
Laid with scarce a sennight's warning,
From that dismal spot a gloom
Spreads o'er all this Christmas morning.

As the grievous news is known,
Still, where friend with friend is meeting,
On each tongue throughout the town
Dies away the wonted greeting.

Seem our hearts with yours to stop, —
"Merry" wishes, worse than folly.
From our hands unnerved, we drop
Ivy, mistletoe, and holly.

Could our hills no Christmas tree
Yield you, of their countless number,
Save Mount Auburn, drearily
Whispering o'er your breathless slumber?

Poverty unwonted joys
From your bounty prompt doth borrow,
While your cherished — orphan — boys
View their gifts through showers of sorrow.

THE CHURCHYARD.

Love meets Death in powerless strife ;
Else your years were of the longest.
Called from blest and blessing life,
When life's dearest ties were strongest,

Child, wife, mother, sister, friend,
All too soon to angel turning,
Your beginning meets your end,
While for bliss you give us mourning.

Who can wonder that the sun
Doth the clouds for weeds importune,
When her eyes that steadfast shone
Over dark or brilliant fortune,

And her lips, that knew the speech
Well of courage and of kindness,
Ere he last went down, were each
Hid in dumbness and in blindness?

But enough ! This holy day
Tells us of Death's open prison, —
To our aching hearts doth say,
In the old phrase, " Christ is risen."

Sadness shadows many a face
Round earth's lower boards and upper ;
Can we grudge to her a place
At her Saviour's marriage supper ?

May He cry, — Who gives her wings
For the other goods He lent her, —
“Ruler over many things,
To thy Lord's rejoicing enter !”



REINE ? — DEAD !

MAY 12th, 1877.

“Diffugere nives ; redeunt jam gramina campis,
Arboribusque comæ.”

HORACE.

Reine ? — DEAD ! How like a ghastly contradiction
It sounds ! as if one cried,
Bewildered by the blow of strange affliction,
That Life itself had died.

Where'er she went, light dawned on faces weary, —
Glad voices grew more gay.
She makes one hushed and shaded chamber dreary,
A darkness in the day, —

The warm May day ! Sweet breathings from the willow
Call all the birds to sing.
She lies upon her cold and breathless pillow,
Whose years were changeless Spring.

She, who had balm for grief where'er it found her,
Stranger's or friend's, *she* lies, —

While all she loved in anguish throng around her, —
Unmoved, with tearless eyes.

“She ”? — no ! — but, for the tomb, her image beauteous ;
For she the path hath trod,
That leadeth spirits gentle, noble, duteous,
And pure, to see their God.

Our ears were deadened by the hearse’s rumble,
The muffling weeds and pall,
The undertaker’s stealthy tread and mumble, —
Death’s muttering mummeries all.

We marked it not ; but unto Woe that weepeth
O’er her a Voice hath said,
“Give place to me. The maiden only sleepeth.
She rests. She is not dead.”

And hark ! Blest fates anew to her foretelling,
It calleth from the skies,
“Unto the mansions in my Father’s dwelling,
I say to thee, arise !”

She flies from us. Our yearnings, reaching after,
Still seek, and all in vain,
For sweeter ways and words and looks and laughter
Than earth shall know again.

“In vain ”? — to draw us on with haste more fitting
To climb the starry stair,

And see her, with the "just, made perfect" sitting
Enthroned in deathless air.

.

Friends, the fair world seems to a death's-head turning,
That smiled on us of yore ;
Enough of it is left us for discerning
The gaps in it, — scarce more.

Nay, — to a hollow egg, whose timely crumbling
Souls hatcheth for the sky.
The sooner for these strokes, our frailty humbling,
Our turn shall come to fly, —

To fly from earth and death and fear and sorrow,
• Where God wipes tears away,
And ten-fold giveth back His great to-morrow
All that He takes to-day.



PEACE TO THE PEACEFUL.

JUNE 8th, 1879.

PEACE to the peaceful, and good-night.
Her many golden sands are run.
She sleeps to wake in cloudless light,
Who loved so well earth's fitful sun.

THE CHURCHYARD.

Unto her Saviour undefiled
Resign her without doubts or fears,
Who ever was in heart a child,
Unspoiled by eighty prosperous years.

Good-night to friendship never cold,
Nor cooled by any fickle shade,
But only by her twelvemonths old,
Lustres, and decades, firmer made.

Good-night to kindly, trusty speech,
Wherein no breath was ever heard
Untrue, or harsh, — that had for each,
Afar or near, its gracious word.

Good-night to one, from youth to eld
Who kept her faith without decay,
Toward God as well as man, and held
Unswervingly the narrow way.

And now as from her threshold, sad
For the first time, its seekers go,
May angels give her welcomes, glad
As 't was her wont to give below.

THROUGH THINNING WOODLANDS.

SEPTEMBER 25th, 1879.

THROUGH thinning woodlands how the dull bell tolls
A knell whose echoes heavily will knoll
Long, long, and low, within our mourning souls
Till over us Death's reaping wheels shall roll !

The burdened wains are groaning with the sheaves ;
Stripped stubble bristles where the grain was green ;
And *she* hath fallen amid the falling leaves, —
To the eternal harvest gathered in !

Grand wifehood, motherhood, and widowhood !
Oh gracious link between us and a past
Of loftier ways ! Home-brooding elm that stood
Till, fond, we dreamed it should forever last !

Oh dignity of life that dignified
All common life around, as some fair hill
Ennobles all the landscape seen beside, —
Grove, road, and meadow with its little rill !

Did angels grudge her beauty all too far,
Like theirs, immortal, — which the reverent Years
Touched tenderly to hallow, not to mar, —
And snatch it from us through a mist of tears ?

Nay, long she waited when her joys were gone ;
 Her firm, sweet smiles hid deeps of inward pain, —
 Her fate's once golden thread in blackness drawn ; —
 And that which was our blessing was her bane.

Toll on then through the dying woods, ye bells !
 If that which is our bane her blessing is,
 Be ours the rainy eye, — the heart that swells, —
 And hers the fulness of heaven's dear-bought bliss.



ONCE MORE.

OCTOBER 8th, 1880.

ONCE more our souls wear mourning weeds. The year is on the
 wane ;
 The summer lieth dead ; and for a little while again
 God takes from us, to perfect it, a gift that He hath given ;
 The birds are flying to the South, — an angel unto heaven.

The queen of home hath left her throne, — the saint her shrine
 deplored, —
 The household saint by votaries watched, guarded, and adored !
 With reverent lips salute the shrine ; and softly let her go
 With only tears of tenderness, — no violence of woe.

Loud weeping would a discord make, her hallowed rest beside.
 She sweetly lived in peace and love ; and as she lived, she died.

Thus let us mourn her, giving thanks for all that she hath been
And is and shall be, when we meet anon in scenes unseen ;

With tender tears, by smiles half lit, recall her ready mirth,
Her generous hand, so eagerly that oped to hungry Dearth,
Nor readier in its almsgiving its treasures to unclasp,
Than quick and soft and warm to close in friendship's cordial grasp.

Hearts aching with the cold upon life's frosty shady side,
How soon they in her sunshine thawed ! Her nobleness with pride
How little did it have to do ! In deed and word, how mild,
Benign, and frank her dealing was with woman, man, and child !

No doom untimely took her by surprise. Her works were done, —
Her works of love in joyfulness. Her gracious course was run.
In ripeness, — still unspoiled by Time, — in heart and mind and soul,
She sat, her own dear self, composed and waiting at the goal.

For her with all Thy servants, Lord, departed, Thee we bless,
Beseeching Thee to give us grace, in faith and righteousness
Their good examples following, so to end our course, and then
Thy heavenly kingdom with them share, — in Jesu's name, amen.



AND IS HE GONE?

MARCH 3d, 1881.

AND is he gone? — So let him go.
Why hold him back for Age and Woe
To bring his manly spirit low?
His love was gone before.

God speed him ! — changing faith to sight,
And patient sorrow for delight,
'Mid fadeless flowers where storm and blight
Can near him come no more ; —

For one, beside the pearly gates,
Still for his coming looks and waits,
Who shared so long his earthly fates
She scarce can enter yet
Into the joys of heaven, without
The arm that circled her about
With cares unflagging, to keep out
The ills that earth beset.

But lone this world grows. Must we see
His face no more? His hearty glee,
As hearty hospitality, —
Things are they of the past?
The old New England gentleman ;
Of those with whom his life began,
Men of his type, the thinned ranks scan, —
Nay, he was nigh the last.

The place that was his own by birth,
He filled so kindly on this earth,
With simple dignity and worth
And native courtesy ;
With wealth that was for use, not show,
That Envy's self might hardly know,
For all his friends to find one foe.
To neighbours, neighbourly, —

To women and to children, he
Was brotherly and fatherly ;
Liked his own country ; o'er the sea,
He felt small need to roam.
With honour having served the state,
He hung not on Ambition's bait,
Contented in his round, sedate,
To rule a happy home.

His mother-wit on books he fed,
As if they were his daily bread ;
Good things he read, and good he said ;
His pleasures were his own.
How well he loved the morning air
In garden or in orchard, — rare
Blossoms and fruits to rear and share,
Till he was left alone !

There is a time to live ; but when
Life has been long and faithful, then
Welcome to worn and wearied men
There is a time to die.
Sadly thy praises I rehearse,
And reverently before thy hearse
Cast down my garland of pale verse.
Good, dear old friend, good-bye !

THE LAST RIPE FRUIT.

DECEMBER 14th, 1881.

THE last ripe fruit hath fallen now
That hung upon the leafless bough.
Oh dreary lot, — the last to be
Of all a happy family !
On hearth and heart cold ashes lie ;
Each window dark, — shut every eye.
The last sad change, so slow to come,
Has come unto that dear old home.
The last? — Not yet. 'T is sad and strange
To think how change still leads to change.
Her home, of yore so full and sweet,
May be the haunt of alien feet,
And soon its reverend roof and wall,
By alien hands be doomed to fall, —
Its sober old-time handsomeness,
To modern moneyed show, give place.

How many a year have we beheld
Her comely and unwrinkled eld
And, in her patient loneliness,
Her brave and gallant cheeriness,
From selfish, fretful gloom as free
As 't was from heartless levity,
Her easy, playful dignity,

And courteous care, that suffered not
One guest to dream himself forgot, —
While circled round her bounteous board,
The dainty sweet and sweeter word, —
And never failed or flagged before
Upon the last, had shut the door,
And she was left, — to grieve alone
For dearer ones forever gone !

Her latest hours like all the rest,
How did they see her, self-possessed,
Ask but her Father's will to know,
Or "pleased to stay" or "glad to go" !
On others' pathways to the last,
She strewed her flowers as in the past,
And, towards her waiting hearse made known,
With kind farewells went gliding down,
As calm as when her coach had come,
At the right time, to take her home.

She went as if to bear above
A jewel for a ring of love
That, broken long, shall be, we pray,
Full-set once more for Christmas day.

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THE NEXT WAVE.

In smiles she went, — in beauty's early bloom ;
And those, who saw, did smile to see her go ;
In haste she went — to meet her early doom,
That waited in Rafe's Chasm by Norman's Woe.

Swept from the rock unto the ambushed death, —
Beaten and tossed amid the billows' wrack, —
To those she left, as with her parting breath,
She panted, "The next wave will bring me back."

Oh mother, the next wave will bring her back !
Oh emptied arms ! Oh desolated home !
Oh dumb, blank threshold, o'er whose foot-worn track
One longed-for step, — one voice, — shall never come !

Oh brother, the next wave will bring her back !
Oh childhood's memories ! Oh guileless glee !
Oh heart-strings knit so fast, to strain and crack ! —
Shared sports and counsels, never more to be !

Oh lover, the next wave will bring her back !
Oh tenderest budding hopes so sweet and bright,
That blossomed fruitless for a blight so black !
Oh morn, without a noon that rushed to night !

Ebb, wave of time, — oh haste ! — to sweep with thee
All aching, bleeding hearts unto their rest.
Next wave, bring back, — wave of eternity, —
Our loved, — our lost, — our Saviour with the blest !

THE DEATH OF LONGFELLOW.

MARCH 24, 1882.

THE lyre is made of funeral flowers, whereat no minstrel sings.
The silver cord is loosed. For aye, are stilled the thrilling strings ;
And, at the fount of melody, the pitcher lieth broken.
The kindest eyes have looked their last ; the tongue its last has spoken.
“ The deep, dull pain is ended now, — the patient anguish over.”
By his beloved’s side in peace, is laid the mourning lover.

For more than Israel’s forty years, have souls with sorrow aching
Marched bravely through life’s desert ways to music of his making.
The goal, the rest, and the reward, ’t was time that he should win them,
When fast the evil days drew on that have no pleasure in them.

As a hurt nerve shoots round the breast its sudden dart of fire,
So runs around the world’s great heart the sharp electric wire,
That bears the tidings ; and about the streets the mourners go
In numbers that man knoweth not, and man can never know,
Still spreading over every soil and under every clime,
A train that is as wide as earth, — perhaps as long as time.

For, whosoe'er the greatest be, our own (too well we know it,
 If we may trust our sorrow), was the *best* and best-loved poet.
 A crowned and sceptred king of song, he kept no lonely state.
 He walked as in a garden rare, and did not lock the gate,
 But, from the clusters of his joys, drew wine to gladden others, —
 From bitter olives of his griefs, sweet oil to heal his brothers.

He pushed not for a foremost place, but sat above the strife
 Where men are shouldering men, and set to music all our life,
 As sits the gentle organist, behind the shrieking choir,
 And players vying each with each, with string and reed and wire, —
 His soft hands laid upon his keys, — and presses out a tone
 That subtly sweetens all the air, and brings unto his own
 The lower and the sharper pitch, discordant, of the rest ;
 He rises and is missed ; and now his mastery stands confessed.

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Oh friends, — few friends that still are left, — how fast the lights are
 going,
 Going out, that made this life a scene with love and beauty glowing !
 How oft for some one near and dear the plumèd chariot black,
 That holdeth only one at once, hath called ! 'T will soon come back.
 God make our waning lamps meanwhile with holy oil burn steady ;
 And let us have no care but this, that we be also ready !

THE YEAR OF DEATHS.

APRIL, 1881-2.

ALL ye whose hearts henceforth must buried lie
In the most sacred earth of some dear grave,
Now that this Year of Deaths hath hurried by,
What joy, — what hope, — what comfort can we have?
“What joy?” Nay, that the dead in Christ arise,
And that our heavy sorrow is not theirs, —
That God doth wipe all tears from their loved eyes,
And to hosannas turn their patient prayers.
“What comfort?” That the time henceforth is short.
“What hope?” While we are waiting, to fulfil
Their, and our Father’s will in such a sort
That we may be scarce parted, but, until
Our death is laid with theirs beneath the sod,
Our life be hid with theirs, with Christ in God.

MISCELLANEOUS.

"Why is my verse so barren of new pride?
So far from variation or quick change?
Why, with the time, do I not glance aside
To new-found methods and to compounds strange?"

SHAKSPEARE.

THE HOURGLASS.

ALONE within a vacant room I stand.
My cold and idle and unclaspèd hand,
(From which dear hands have slipped to hide away
Themselves, and waste to clay in churchyard clay,)
Doth hold an hourglass that his hours no more
Shall tell, who was its owner heretofore ;
For his are ended, and henceforward he
May but one period know, — eternity !

Through piteous tears, unpitied I behold
The dull gray sands, — that ever as of old
Sifting and drifting steadily do go,
As when they fell to measure joy, not woe, —
And think on sand that is on coffins thrown,
And snow that over graves comes crumbling down,
And say while no one hears, “ Thus worthless all
My moments, months, and years henceforth will fall
In Time's glass over-full ; they only must
Ashes to ashes be, and dust to dust ! ”

O faint of heart ! Bethink thee how, unseen,
An hourglass meanwhile is held between
The mighty angels twain of Life and Death,
To mete to thee thy scanty term of breath.
The hurrying grains that leave its emptying cup,

Of deeds, words, thoughts, and feelings are made up,
Or good or evil. Short enough for prayer
And toil is thy reprieve, without despair
Or wasteful sloth. Oh, let the Past be past !
If far the Future, yet it cometh fast.
Thy dwindling Now is fraught with lengthening doom.
Ere Satan bloweth up a wild simoom
To choke and bury thee, turn all those sands
To mortar for thy house not made with hands,
Where thou again, — forever, — mayst abide
In bliss with all thy blest, in Christ who died.

*WHO IS THE RICHEST?*

Who is the Richest? The crowd said, " He
Whose pleasure-boats sail upon every sea,
Whose villas rise upon mount and shore,
Whose gardens broider wide acres o'er,
Whose horses win at many a race,
Who hires the best seats at every place
Where show is seen or music heard,
Who buys of the rarest for bower and board,
And never stays to count the cost, —
He is the richest ; he spends the most."
But he squandered his all on his greed and pride ;
And he was a beggar before he died.

Who is the Richest? On 'Change they agreed,
" He who grudges his daily need,

Who earns the most and who spends the least,
He who wastes nothing on show or feast,
Kinsman or friend, but early and late
O'er desk and ledger has toiled and sate
From his boyhood up, till the gray hairs now
Are growing few o'er his furrowed brow, —
He should be richest ; he's paid the cost ;
He must be richest, who saves the most."
But to him were love and care denied,
And he was a beggar when he died.

Who is the Richest? Said no man,
He whose house and whose fare are plain,
Whose coat is old, and afoot who goes
To the homes of Sicknesses, Wants, and Woes,
Who loves with his neighbour his all to share,
And, to make it more, on himself to spare
All that he can, nor count it lost. —
Can he be rich who foregoes the most? —
Though, when he was dying too, the poor
Swarmed with small offerings in his door,
Watched and tended and prayed and cried,
Leaving no wealth, save of love, he died.

Ere the third day brought its morning light,
The three dead men rose up in the night,
And journeyed away to the Far-off Land
And the street where the Many Mansions stand
The spendthrift and miser, homeless there,
Knocked at many a gate with many a prayer,
But found all bolted and, stiff and stark,

Staggered away in the haunted dark
 With teeth that chattered for fright and cold.
 But the other saw in letters of gold
 His name o'er a castle-portal fair, —
 Through the mists of death that hung in the air, —
 Flash like lightning ; and out there poured,
 With a burst of music, a long, long horde
 Of shining ones, that with sweet-voiced din
 Thronged round him and lifted and bore him in.
 Sobbed the widow, " You made my heart sing for joy ! "
 " Oh my father dear ! " laughed the orphan boy.
 " You sheltered me ! " — " You my famine fed ! " —
 " You gave me my chance to earn honest bread ! " —
 And the prisoner shouted, " You came to me !
 You brought me the truth that made me free ! "
 While the angels sang through the heavenly host,
 " HE IS THE RICHEST WHO GIVES THE MOST. "

 AGAPÈ.

A FABLE.

UPON a birthday of the stars,
 Bright Gabriel on the Lightning rode.
 The Rainbow's gate of sevenfold bars
 He leapt, and came to Man's abode ;
 And to our forefathers he said,
 " To-day there 's joyance overhead.
 We make it now our chief employ,

We sons of God, to shout for joy.
 But more than half their bliss they waste,
 Who give not of the bliss they taste ;
 And therefore of our Sire I 'll crave, —
 With us to ask it is to have, —
 That He to you will not refuse,
 This hour, whatever boons you choose."

Then some chose sceptres ; some chose wealth ;
 Some, lyres ; some, mates ; and some chose health ;
 While, as each gave his wish a name,
 Through Gabriel's claspèd hands it came.

But soon began the angel fleet
 To spurn this world with homesick feet.
 His snowy wings did rowing make
 Along the air a silvery wake,
 And hung upon the sky the spray,
 Which mortals call the Milky Way.
 Doubling the earth, he steered aright ;
 But yet it was not out of sight
 Ere, with the lambs that round her lay,
 He spied young Agapè at play.
 He stooped and hovering o'er her smiled
 And said, " And what wouldst thou, my child? "

The little girl
 Tossed back a curl,
 That hid the surprise
 Of her joyous eyes,
 And laughing cried, " Not one alone

Of all thy goodly gifts, to own
 Would e'er content my greedy heart.
 I seek of each man's good a part ;
 And not alone of man's below,
 But God's above I seek ; and so,
 Kind angel, let thy shepherdess
 The view of all men's happiness
 Enjoy as God doth, looking down
 From the high footstool of His throne."

Then in a vision, on his road
 He bore her up to sit with God,
 Singing, "Greatest, the boon thy tongue
 Asks, — higher and wider than all the others ;
 And, if no longer, 't will last as long
 As that of any of thy brothers."

MORAL.

Dost thou wish thou hadst lived that day,
 To make sure of one gift granted, —
 Some boon that Man shall want alway
 As the men of that age wanted ?
 If thou canst forego the rest,
 And rest contented with the best,
 Then unto thee fulfilled shall be
 The generous wish of Agapè.
 Needs but in mind and heart the road
 She climbed, to climb and dwell with God,
 And love thy neighbour as thyself.
 For still thy neighbours power and pelf

THE GHOSTLY MOTHER.

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And fame and love, among them share ;
And, if thou mak'st their bliss thine own,
Though poor, unnoted, and unknown,
There's not a good so rich and rare,
But, — safe from envy as from strife, —
Shall fall within thy blessed life.



THE GHOSTLY MOTHER.

“O, is it the wind that shakes the latch,
Or the hail that taps the pane?”
“’Tis I, your own dead sister's child,
Come over the stormy main.

“My daddy has set a step-dame grim
In my own dear mammy's place ;
She combs and kisses her bantlings twain,
While the tears do wash my face.

“She gives me the mouldy crusts to eat,
To her lad, my milk and bread.
She gives me the tattered clouts to wear,
To her lass, my gown of red.

“The welkin dark is my roof by night,
I drink the rain of the sky ;
She lulls her own in my mammy's bed ;
While on barn-yard straw I lie.

“ With fearful feet have I fled the land ;
I rode on the pitying sea ;
I have come to your home on the surf-beat strand.
Now open, my kin, to me.”

“ Go back as you came to your house and home ;
Go back to your dame and sire. —
Shall we snatch the food from our children’s mouths,
Or push them from the fire ? —

“ For if our sister is dead indeed,
As dead she well may be,
She cares as little as I and mine
What happens to thine and thee.”

Then a wail arose at the bolted door,
And a wail at the window-pane.
Who answered it ? — A too well-known voice,
Ere it died on the wind-swept main ? —

It was answered thus ; and they oped the door
In haste and in quaking fright ;
But they heard no more save the surges’ roar,
And saw but the bare black Night.

“ My husband, I fear me we ’ve done amiss.”
“ My wife, what ’s done is done ;
And we ’ve all the more for our daughters dear,
And for our darling son.”

But the daughters pined ; and the son he dwined ;
And, when the year rolled round,
They shuddered all in the fisherman's cot ;
For they heard a hollow sound :

“ You turned my child from your cruel door
To die on the kinder wave !
Now give me one of your own to lie
By her in her watery grave.

“ She is lonely there. She wants a mate ;
And we, in the night and storm,
Will give readier welcome to yours than ye
Gave mine at your fire-side warm.”

With holy water they showered the door.
They listened. No more was said ;
But, when they turned to the cradle back,
The baby boy lay dead.

The bread that they ate was salt with tears ;
And they lived in woe and fear ;
Till the hollow voice was heard again
At the end of another year :

“ Your baby still cries for his sisters dear ” !
Then out went each helpless sprite
Of their daughters pale from their circling arms, —
Went out to the wild black Night.

"Now cheer thee, my wife ; what's o'er is o'er ;
The mead and the meal are sweet."
"What boots it to have enough and to spare,
When the children cannot eat ?

"But set thy sail and ply thine oar,
And waft me o'er Ocean's foam ;
For never again, that voice to hear,
Will I bide in thy haunted home."

And he set the sail, and he plied the oar.
The pitiless hearth was cold ;
And rust made faster the cruel door ;
And the window was sealed with mould ;

And still they sped o'er the hoar sea-foam,
And little did reck or care,
So they left behind them the haunted hut,
How far they went or where.

Thus, when the night of doom came round,
It found them off Norway's coast.
Next day to the haven a bark beat in,
That had been well-nigh lost :

"Afloat in many a deadly storm,
Have I and my mess-mates been ;
But such a storm as we saw last night,
Our eyes had never seen ;

“ And such a storm as we saw last night,
May I see nevermore ! —
I 'd rather forsake harpoon and sail
To die on the weary shore. —

“ For, just as the thunder bellowed down
The roar of the raging gale,
We saw a skiff near the Maelstrom's crest ;
And we heard the hollow wail

“ Of a woman, — but living woman's voice
Ne'er gave so dread a sound, —
But it only cried, ‘ Mine outcast child ! —
My kindred, the night comes round.’

“ That skiff, by the lightning's flash, we saw.
It reared with its keel upright,
Like a maddened steed, then wildly plunged
O'er the Maelstrom's brink from sight ;

“ It headlong plunged with a shrieking pair,
Who clung to its rocking mast,
Led on by a woman's phantom form ;
Her hand clutched its bowsprit fast.

“ 'Twas followed by weltering children three, —
The rudder they strove to climb, —
And where or wherefore they went, no man
May know on this side of time ;

“ But the Ghostly Mother a ghastly girl
Held close to her breathless breast.
Oh, holy Mary, keep souls from sin, —
Give sinful souls good rest ! ”



GWYNETH.

“ SISTER GWYNETH, dost thou know that thy loyal Guy de Vaux
Waiteth long and waiteth thee,
Where the leaves are green and cool in the dew around the pool
Underneath the trysting-tree, —

“ Where the hawthorn’s snowy spray twinkles all the livelong day
In the robin-haunted shade ?
Up and to him with me go, o’er the high and through the low,
Like a true and tender maid.”

“ Brother, nay ; but I will ride, with his rival at my side
Dashing by him nothing loath ;
Then will I, ere day is done, in the dance at set of sun
Cast my scorn alike on both.”

“ Sister Gwyneth, oh my twin, groweth folly up to sin ?
Drop thy gold where robbers be,
Oh thou wild and wanton girl ; into verjuice throw thy pearl,
And thy diamond in the sea ;

“ But, of gifts by mortal given unto mortal under heaven,
None 's so precious as a heart !
It is neither bought nor sold ; if it slippeth from thy hold,
It may work thy deadly smart.”

With a silvery laugh, laughed she in her cruel haughty glee :
“ Can Guy tear his heart away
From the net I 've round it thrown ? — The poor knight's, no more his
own,
But a bauble for my play.

“ Not red-cross nor scallop-shell, virtue hath to break my spell.
At our hosts' head though marched he
On the Jordan's holy strand, with the beckoning of my hand,
Could I wave him back to me.

“ How do warriors prove their might ? — By their foemen slain in
fight. —
Flames ? — By ruins black and bare. —
Billows ? — By the sinking wrecks, crashing masts, and riven decks. —
Maidens fair ? — By men's despair.”

“ GWYNETH, Gwyneth, Guy de Vaux lieth still and lieth low
Where he sought thee at the tryst,
Very blithe and debonair, when this morning's breezy air
Stirred his love-locks, but doth list,

“ As it seems, no coming tread ; for he listeth not his head
As the deer pace by to drink ;
And his breathless hunting-horn, with his scabbard, lies forlorn
On the daisy-spangled brink ;

“ And his eyes upturned be with a look that does not see,
Where he spends his day alone
On the darkly dappled ground ; — and a sword his heart has found,
And the sword, it is his own ! ”

With a wild shriek, shrieketh she ; and her quivering feet they flee
Through the low and o'er the high,
Still outstripping all that follow, till she gains the dismal hollow
Where her love for her did die :

“ Oh warm heart, — thou still and cold, for my cruelty ! — behold,
In its turn my own shall ache !
The fell bloom, that wrought thy woe, shall be ruddy nevermo'e
For thy dear and piteous sake !

“ Can another victim slain, to thy wrongèd sprite, obtain
Late amends or any rest ? —
Take my kiss and latest breath. Take, *his* sword, thy latest sheath
In my heartless, punished breast ! ” —

All within the wild-rose bower, grass grew redder than the flower
Or the bud that o'er did wave, —
O'er the pale and hapless pair. Those that sought and found them,
there
Dug their lone, unhonoured grave ;

And they bade the bells be rung and the solemn masses sung,
For their stained souls' repose.
Did the angels ransom sing, or the fiends wild 'larums ring
O'er their hopeless, endless woes?

As their life flowed fast away, "Lord, forgive!" did either pray? —
Did heaven's mercy stoop so low?
Till the graves give up their dead, and the judgment-books are read,
None shall tell and none shall know.



SIR CONRAD OF RAVENSTONE.

SIR CONRAD, the Count of Ravenstone,
Was the wickedest knight that was ever known;
A splendid, mighty, and evil thing
He rushed like a dragon on the wing,
Flashing and gleaming in green and gold
And scales of steel, betwixt hold and fold,
Castle and cabin, low and high.
Before him Flight went and a Cry;
And his charger's hoofs trod out beneath
Groans of anguish and moans of death.
At eve, spread Famine her mantle blank
Where at morn the harvest stood rich and rank,
Where he like a mildew and blight passed by;
And smoke climbed up the blue of the sky
To tell of his deeds to the darkening heavens;
As down to the corpses flew the ravens.

Hated, save but by one page, of all
His luckless neighbours great and small,
It happened that, when he sent one day
To a fisherman near for an eel, by way
Of black-mail, he gave this page to take
Back to his master a snow-white snake.

Easily Conrad read his craft,
And swore like a trooper ; but then he laughed
Saying, " Although this kind of fish
Make not of all the daintiest dish,
Still will I use it to help my wit ;
For I mind me according to holy writ
'T is the wisest beast of all the field ;
And 't is said, that its flesh can its wisdom yield,
And give man the power to know the words
Of each of the other beasts and birds."
So, being in no way over-nice,
He bade the cook serve it up in a trice ;
And, though he found it none too good,
He ate as much as he possibly could,
But could not quite finish the tail and head.
" Throw that away," to the page he said ;
" But mark me, if thou a morsel eat,
'T will be thy very last taste of meat ! "

Just to find out the reason why,
Needs must the lad the new dainty try ;
He swallowed a mouthful and no more,
The instant he passed through the pantry-door.

Swift on Sir Conrad meanwhile there came
A loathing shudder, — a burning shame ;
Her tales of him, Memory began to tell.
“ ’Tis as if I had taken the bellows to hell !
Power have I won God’s wrath to see ;
But where — oh, where, — is the way to flee ? ”
The serpent’s wisdom taught but despair ;
And choking he rushed for the open air.

Out in the sun in the castle-court,
The gossiping poultry held high resort :
“ Duck,” clucked the hen, “ Duck, Duck, his luck
Is over ; his clock its last has struck ! ”
“ What ! ” quacked the ducks, “ what, what ? — d’ ye wot,
What, what shall be his lot, lot, lot ? ”
Down from the roof cooed the doves, “ Do you
Know what he will do ? — oh, what will he do ? ”

Just then the page, more pale than chalk,
Tottered across the paven walk.
Sir Conrad collared him in his way
And cried, “ Dost hear what these vermin say ? ”
To try him ; when, taken by surprise,
As red as a peach to his starting eyes,
Stammered the page, “ When the sun goes down,
They say that thy towers shall be overthrown ! ”
“ Villain and wretch, thou hast stolen my food
And my secret ; and now may they do thee good !
Bring me my steed ; — then a long good-bye ! ”

Then the cock on the wall crowed shrill and high,
“ Go ; and go quick, and alone, or rue ! ”

And Sir Conrad answered it, "This will I do ;
Unarmed on my courser fleet and wight
Straight will I fly, before the light ;
Unto St. Bruno's shrine I'll run, —
There, with repentance and penance done
And holy water, will cleanse away
The stains of my soul ; I will fast and pray
Many a long year, and my all will give, —
All I have left, — so I may but live ;
Minster and abbey and convent I'll build."
Still in such speech, each pause he filled
With oaths and curses and shouts of rage
To hurry his giddy, confounded page.

His bolting horse was no sooner brought
Than mounted and wheeled ; when a glimpse he caught
Of tear-drowned eyes and a quivering chin ;
And something unwonted stirred within ;
For his page looked still like the baby child
That, innocent all and unbeguiled,
Some lustres three or less before,
From a shrieking mother's arms he tore, —
Writhing upon a husband slain, —
And tossed to the hands of his laughing train.
(Reared in that wild and evil brood,
The nursling scarcely knew ill from good).
Again the shrill cock its warning crew :
"Go ; and go quick, — and alone, — or rue !" —
He looked to the west and the sinking sun ;
Time to waver and weigh was none ;
But he dragged the stripling up by the nape

Over the crupper : " My own escape,
Whether thou hinder or whether thou share,"
He muttered, " methinks it is only fair,
If I have loaded thy soul with sin,
That thou shouldst cumber my body in
My first and haply my latest flight,
And the race we must run with Death ere night !"

As the scrambling hoofs tore the rocky way,
He gasped at each bound to him, " Pray, boy, pray !"
As down o'er the rocky way they flew,
The page sobbed " Our Father ! " — 't was all he knew.
Still as he spurred down his headlong track,
Sir Conrad once and twice looked back :
The first time, his towers in gold and jet
'Gainst the kindling sunset were painted yet ;
The next time, the sky was all on fire ;
But, black as a coal, each vane and spire
Stood firm as the hills. He might well-nigh deem
His dread the child of some wine-sprung dream.
He looked again ; and he knew no more
Save the sun's last flash and the earthquake's roar.
The courser's heels flew over its head ;
And under its carcass the knight lay dead.

Rumbling up through the cracking ground,
Burst a brimstone smoke and a roystering sound ;
And, ere the shaking shock was done,
The Devil was there to claim his own.
But the page stood stanch ; he bestrode his lord,
And drew with both hands, from the sheath, his sword.

The blade had no force the fiend to slay ;
But the cross of the hilt kept him still at bay.

While yet the poor boy " Pater Noster ! " screamed,
A sudden light o'er the desert streamed ;
And out shone St. Michael, calm and fair
In his deathless youth and his long bright hair,
With a look of pity, upon his face,
That seemed even Satan to embrace,
Unblenching and strong to hold him back
From making his blackness still more black :
" Avaunt, false Foe, for this man is mine, —
Mine by the might of that sacred sign ! —
For another's life with his own life's loss
Hath he bought, and a share in the Holy Cross.
Not to the fire that never dies,
But to that that hallows and purifies,
Shall his woful sprite in safety go.
Poor youth, depart ; and let all men know
Henceforth what is the accepted time
Of repentance : Far better than eve is prime ;
But one half-hour of Now doth far outvie,
For atonement, whole ages of By and by."

THE MANDRAKE; OR, ALICE'S BRIDAL.

Argument: According to the custom of feudal times, two girls of low birth are reared in the household of Constance, the wife of Earl Ronald. One of them, named Edith, is grateful and faithful. Alice, the other, betrothed by the consent of her mistress to a peasant named Ralph, conspires against her peace with Elspeth, a witch, gains the affections of her husband and breaks her heart. Ronald repents, but too late, and bound by his rash vows, after Constance's death, marries Alice. On her wedding night, having offended her accomplice by the refusal of a necklace, she is stupefied by the smell of a poisonous and enchanted flower, concealed by the former in a nosegay, and buried half-alive. From this state she is unwittingly rescued by Blanche, the orphan child of her benefactress, who lays a violet dipped in holy water on her coffin, and repeats the Prayers for the Dead of the Roman Catholic Church. These dissolve the spell; and Alice dies.

"Who is it that goes to the wood?
A woman so wrinkled and old."

SOUTHEY.

THE moon is up; the moon is high;
The moon shines far and wide.
On castle, crag, and grove she shines,—
On vale and river-side.

She looks on gate and battlement,—
Through traceried window tall,—
Through latticed cottage-casements peeps,
And ivy on the wall.

She sees where on her marble tomb
A marble Constance sleeps,—
How o'er her hangs her fickle lord
And vainly, lonely, weeps.

THE MANDRAKE;

Alike on little slumbering Blanche
The careless beauty smiles,
And Alice' restless pallet rocked
By Dreams of guilty wiles.

Upon the cold, regardless main
Her playful gold she throws,
And points with silvery sceptre where
The stealing streamlet goes.

Now and anon some drowsy stars
Their winking eyes uncloze ;
Her, on her watch-tower still, they view
And draw again their curtains blue,
And turn them to repose.

The kine upon the dewy turf
Or ruminant or rest.
The lamb his nodding, drooping head
Leans on his mother's crest.

The cricket, harmless reveller,
His flower-cups quaffs, and sings
Till with his chiming fairy-bells
The meadow softly rings.

The air is still as when of yore
Night held her breath to hear,
Till angels should their Prince's birth
Make joyously appear.

And gaily yet looks the moon on all.
Does she see yon cloud come forth,
And rush for her high and queenly throne,
From his ambush in the north?

He runs like a spider on his prey ;
And, in the envious fold
Of his murky web, her struggling head
Is helplessly enrolled !

He has rent the oak from the sky to the sod ;
He sits on its splintered top ;
And the forest shakes with his bellowing roar,
That the Darkness swallows up.

'Tis the night of nights most dread
That gave Jesu to the dead.
Now the Air's black Prince hath power !
Elspeth knows her place and hour.

She squats on the ground ;
Her cloud hangs above ;
The wood walls her round ;
Dim shapes round her move.

The Will-o'-the-Wisp, with a gossamer net
O'er his shivering wings, they have caught
And ruthlessly out of his fenny haunts
For his elvish lantern brought,
Shaped of phosphorus like to a wayfarer's skull,
Whom he lured to a smothering pit ;

With his wide round eyes on the work in hand
He shrinkingly stares, and the uncouth band.

The trees of the forest, they shudder and shrink.
As bellows the Thunder, big drops black as ink
Plash down from their sweating and smoking rind.
Blindly crashes among them the terrified Wind.

With a quick confused cry,
Through the groves their tenants fly,
Mew and bark and caw and croak
From blasted turf and shattered oak,
On, — beneath, — within.
What should withered Elspeth care?
Seasoned she, to sounds of fear. —
Gone, Wind, reptile, beast, and bird;
And the witch's voice alone is heard,
More dreadful than the din.

Although her hollow tones are heard
The ear can catch no wonted word.
She mutters heavy, low, and still,
An evil sound to purpose ill,
Invoking him who Eve beguiled
And hapless Alice' heart defiled.

While her snake-bone beads she plies,
Groveling low and crouched she lies. —
Blithe and proud and nothing daunted,
Up she springs; her prayer is granted!
With her spindle pierced, the earth

Spews the deadly Mandrake forth ;
With her spindle, round it she
Draweth lessening circles three.
As duly, to pluck it, she turns from the east,
The rallying Wind faintly pants from the west.

Shrill she shrieks with mocking rage,
"Satan, forfeit not thy pledge !
If thy pranks my schemes defeat,
Turned a saint, thine own I cheat !"
At her bidding, goblins nine
Range them round the outmost line ;
Changèd, at her next commands,
Verdant, with a hundred hands
Nine palmettoes stand on guard,
With their fans each blast to ward :

"Master, to ensure thy grace
Shall my blood our covenant trace ;
Spindle-stabbed, my withered arm
Willing bleeds for others' harm. —
Thy leafy son thou givest o'er
To make my draught of vengeance sure ;
Ere his slumberous sighs are past,
I will lay our victim fast.
If she break my toils so firm, —
Cycles though before the term, —
Satan, seize my mortgaged soul !
Whilst I live, in my control
Must her thankless spirit groan.
Through this ancient skin and bone,

When his callow pets the worms are creeping,
To Death the mouldy Kaiser's keeping
Outwardly consigned, the treasure
Shall await thy gentle pleasure.
When the last dread trump shall sound
Still her struggling ghost fast bound,
Vainly for its freedom straining,
Must abide thy plenteous gleaning."
As to the fell contract she added her name,
Sprang Satan beneath it, in pale blue flame.

With fingers lean she then caressed
Its leaves, and thus the plant addressed :
" Pretty cousin, thou and I,
Framed alike to ban and die,
For our mutual welfare be
Here this night in company.
Thou dost leave thy native land
For the plump and comely hand
Of a fair girl, from whose lip
Thou the untasted dew shalt sip,
Thou shalt freeze her pulses warm,
Palsy thou her springy form,
Nor let her beating sprite depart,
Caged within her iron heart.
Far beyond thy natural right,
I will multiply thy might ;
Till the power of Death doth flee,
Thou his gaoler grim shalt be,
So thou but fulfil thy trust, —
Lay her, witting, in the dust.

She must strive and make no sign ;
She must struggle and be mine.
Choke hers with thy potent breath,
Till the pall's soft velvet over,
Like the night-hag's cloak, doth cover
Silent life and conscious death.
When again the owl is whooping,
 When the darkling clock strikes twelve,
When the wier-wolves forth are trooping,
 When the ghoul and warlock delve,
As my wrath shall endure
Let my vengeance be sure.
Now, to gain the worthy boon,
Yield thee up without thy moan."
Every article decreed
Thus, she plucked the bowing weed.

It shrieked ! And the watchman Wind, abashed,
Called his fellows from far and wide ;
With a rush in her face they cleared the place
And the whirling oak into atoms dashed ;
And the faint, wan moon peeped out again
On the dank, dim earth and the ebbing tide.

PART II.

"Io non morii e non rimasi vivo :
 Pensa oramai per te, s' hai fior d' ingegno,
 Qual io divenni, d' uno e d' altro privo."

DANTE.

"A breathless being, darkened but intense."

BYRON.

"COME, braid and twine my golden hair ; it is my marriage-morn !
 Bring buds of balmy eglantine and spangled sprays of thorn.
 Henceforth shall rubies, — diamonds, — these glittering tresses deck,
 And pearls usurp the lily's place upon my fairer neck.
 Then lightly forth in rustic coif and russet mantle dight ;
 Sheen velvet's gorgeous folds enlap my loveliness to-night !"

Meek Edith moved not at her wont to do her sister's hest ;
 And words of grief too long up-pent burst from her swelling breast :
 "So soon sues Ronald ? — Bid him woo a maid of lofty race,
 Who never heard *her* worth and woe, to fill her lofty place.
 But *thou*, my sister ! — Thou and I were reared at Constance' knee ;
 She taught thy witching lyre and lay, — thy courtly broidery.
 To me she gave the humbler art, that suits my lowlier frame,
 Her precious balsams to prepare, and heal the sick and lame.
 She led us to her lordly halls from penury and care ;
 Scarce pretty Lady Blanche received more gentle nurture there ;
 And, when to boast his honest vows thou sought'st her merry bower,
 To Ralph fair roods of land she gave, — to thee a plenteous dower."

"Dost envy then my favouring stars ? Cease, cease thy droning
 prate !
 Thou, decked in silk and miniver, my tire-woman shalt wait."

"Will no fond anguish yearn, when fans the heath the soft southwind
Or fagots crackle on the hearth, for him thou leav'st behind?
His fattening steers graze up and down, — his plough rusts in the
furrow, —
While loitering o'er the tawny moor he communes with his sorrow."

"Was mine a face, — a form was mine, — upon a cottage hearth
To pine, a peasant's weary drudge in hardship, toil, and dearth?"

"'Tis said, — that thou with spells unblest to win our lord hast
toiled, —
Our lady's white and spotless fame with wicked whispers soiled !
(Her hand in mine, she kissed the cross, when God's pale angel came ;
'Forgive as we forgive,' she breathed and, dying, breathed thy name.)
Though such thy deeds, — and saints forefend ! — thou still mayst be
forgiven ;
Within the convent's holy shades stand free the gates of heaven."

"Go thou and patter beads and creeds ; I'll see thy shrine en-
dowed ;
The weakling finds fit place among the silly, saintly crowd."

"Oh, with an evil woman late, at odds thou wert ! Beware !
Upon a dragon yesternight one saw her in the air."

"She but would have the costly beads, my lord brought o'er the sea.
Blessed of the pope, I gave instead thy mistress' rosary.
They lie, who say the beldame's false ; she told me long ago,
A countess' coronet should press my forehead's radiant snow.
And see her kindly nosegay sent to shame thine idle fear, —
The myrtle and the orange-flower, — a queen would prize them dear !"

She knelt before her hoary sire : "Nay ; get thee hence ; begone !
I cannot bless our lady's foe ; I will not curse mine own.
This, of the fulness of my mouth, it is no sin to speak,
I would that thou hadst ne'er been born, her noble heart to break ;
And take this with thee on thy way, — a father's prophecy :
The peace and love from her estranged, they ne'er will light on thee !"

"Good go with thee !" her mother whined, "I knew these aged
eyne
Would see at last my rosy maid a dame both fair and fine.
So goes the world. We take our turn. Once, goodlier e'en than thou,
I danced and sang, and now must twirl the weary wheel, and sew.
And oft I miss Dame Constance' cates and flasks of cordial wine.
I would — but no ; the newly great forget old friends and kin."

Her cold unwilling hand, took Ralph ; his heart it throbbed so sore,
He nought could say, save, "Fare thee well. I go unto the war."

"Is mine a face, — a form is mine, — upon a cottage hearth,
A peasant's weary drudge to pine in hardship and in dearth?"

Lo, at the gate thy milk-white steed ! Lo, there thy sabled lord !
He murmured, "This should never be, but for my knightly word !"
He muttered, "At the altar I, thy mistress, prized not more,
Nor when she gave me Blanche than, wise too late, I thee abhor !
Craft nestles in thy dimpled cheek ; flash daggers in thine eye ;
And subtle poison lurks beneath thy tongue's bland witchery."

Now for the castle-chapel quit in pomp the hamlet mean ;
Up to the walls that, frowning late, received the funeral train !
The young, the old, before, behind, beheld her with delight

Nor deemed that perfidy could wear a guise so fair and bright ;
And still to swell the fair array pricked knight and squire ; and still
Swept dame and damsel, palfrey-borne, from screening grove and
hill.

Her pathway swept and garlanded a seemly garden shined ;
But bitter and remorseful thoughts pressed thronging on her mind :

“A high-born dame they welcomed once, of beauty more divine ;
Her heart, it throbbed as blithe and high, but ah, more true than mine !
'T was hither, led by Love, she came in life's sweet May-day brief ;
Blessing and blest, 't was here she dwelt ; and here she died of grief.”

“Oh, one dear violet for me !” from prattling Blanche, she hears :
“'T is like my mother Constance' eyes that ever swam in tears.”
She gently threw the orphan child the blossom praised so well ;
And underneath her foot the while, unmarked the Mandrake fell.

Fell leaf and stalk ; the flower remained, — the flower of doom and
dole !
And through her warm and swelling veins a creeping numbness stole.
Or from the ambushed gloom a blight did grim-faced corbels pour ;
Or hungry, half-fed Vapours pierce the monumental floor ?
She felt and wondered silently. The priest his office sped ;
His voice was like a water-fall's ; she knew not what he said.

He ended. Wistfully she gazed, that maiden high and proud,
Gazed up into the twilight sky, — a sky of rack and cloud ;
And piteously she gazed upon the gathered guests. They seem
Like dreams remembered of the dead, — so far and mute and dim !

Then within her wildered brain
Rang a weird and dirge-like strain :
"Yield thine unavailing breath, —
Spirits we, of mighty Death !
From the breast the babe we tear, —
Lay the aged on the bier.
We can win the tender bride
From the gallant bridegroom's side.
When the youthful pulse beats highest,
Our stealthy steps are oft the nighest.
Through thy festive bravery,
Alice, we have come for thee !
Lo, thy Mandrake's sombre bell
Summons us and toils thy knell !"

Her bloom and strength together fled, as ceased the inward sound.
Oh, where were Ralph and Edith then ? She sank upon the ground.
"*Within* the ground," dark Ronald cried, "ho, for my lady, room !"
She felt the swaying of the bier, — the chillness of the tomb.
Within her side a hand of ice found out her freezing heart ;
The Worm said to her, "Welcome home ; my bed-fellow thou art !"

"Midnight strikes ; and all is well,"
Calls the watchman from the tower.
Elspeth comes to close her spell ;
Elspeth knows her place and hour.

Softly falls her cat-like foot ;
Softly opes the massy door.
With a red and lurid glow,
Glares the mildewed sepulchre.

Turned upon the pallid face,
More secure her victim lies.
Round the throat, the shroud she strains, —
Faster seals the starting eyes :

“ As my wrath shall endure,
Let my vengeance be sure.
Thus the backward cross I sign.
Thus I croon my magic line :
‘ Over, under, three times three ;
As thou art, so shalt thou be.’ ”
Fades the gleam on vault and door ;
Alice feels that all is o’er.

Before her Time, with ghastly stare, stood stiffened into stone ;
The Mandrake’s breath had chilled his glass ; no sands therein would
run.

Twelve ages passed within the crypt, — twelve hours o’er living men ;
And suddenly the bells rang out their Sunday peal again.
It shook the Monarch of the Mould ; he thought upon his Prey,
That burst from pious Joseph’s tomb and winding-sheet away.
It shook the Monarch of the Mould ; he thought upon the day
That, slain by his own hand, himself will on hell’s threshold lay.

It ceased. The dreadful hush returned. Then childlike pleadings
broke
The nearer stillness ; and again the stifled Echoes woke :
“ My saintly mother constantly prayed for her morn and night.
Oh, lead me ever in her steps, — so shall I walk aright !
I do not fear the damps and gloom. — I do not fear the Worm. —
My mother taught that gracious deed the doer saves from harm.

The violet that Alice gave, within the font I laid.
 Behold how sturdily once more it rears its tiny head !
 This, weeping yet with holy dew, — all evil things to chase
 And draw good angels down, — I 'll leave within her burial-place."

On to the spellbound, boldly came the child, and prayed aloud :
Eternam dona requiem. . . . Then burst the choking shroud !
 The body in its cerements turned ; again the walls were bright,
 And Constance floated o'er the twain in clouds of amber light !
 The Mandrake yielded to the flower of Alice' one good deed ;
 A smile played round her parting lips ; and fled her spirit freed.



Lighthouse May.

THE lighthouse flashed from the rocky isle
 That looks far over the sea ;
 And this was the tale that the wild winds told,
 In the fisherman's boat, to me :

The lighthouse keeper was bent and gray ;
 His daughter was fair and young ;
 She was light of foot, and deft of hand ;
 And merry and sweet was her tongue.

The old man sat in his old arm-chair,
 With hands that held his brow ;
 Singing, down from her bower in the rocky tower,
 She came like a bird from a bough.

She paused at the door ; then o'er the floor
 She darted, and lit on his knee ;
'Mid kisses she cried, " Now what doth betide ?
 My father will tell to me.

" Hath the bitter wind, that howled all night,
 Blown back to thy bones their ache ?
Or yearn'st thou with men thy dwelling again
 On the mainland blithe to make ? "

He bared his eyes to look into hers ;
 And therein big tears she saw
Like icicles', hung on an ice-bound ship,
 That weep in an Arctic thaw :

" Might but its strength to my arm come back,
 Then would I laugh at its pain.
This rock is my home ; let the young man roam,
 The old in his nook remain.

" Since my silver crown of hair was brown,
 And first to these crags I came,
Nor in summer night warm, nor in winter storm,
 Has the sailor missed their flame.

" Low runs the oil in the lantern's bowl,
 The oil in the cask runs dry ;
In such a gale there 's none but a whale
 Would bring me a fresh supply.

"To-day 's no gleam on the water's rim,
West, north, or east or south ;
And look, how the seas, like maddened curs,
Are foaming all at the mouth.

"To-night will be a night of dread,
That only will turn to doom,
On the yawning deck of the sinking wreck
That roofeth the briny tomb !"

She hung on his neck a moment stilled,
Then smiling before him stood :
"O, light doth float my own little boat,
At play with the chafing flood.

"The blast blows straight at the sandy strand ;
And strong is my arm to steer ;
And, haply before it is lighting-time,
Shall the oil and I be here."

Her mother chid and prayed and wept,
In vain ; for her sire could hark
To nought but the thought of the seamen lost,
Going down to drown in the dark,

Till, out of hearing, he called her back ;
For the spray broke o'er the hull,
And her tiny sail flickered about in the flaws,
As flickers the wild sea-gull.

The waves came up, and the clouds came down ;
They could see her skiff no more ;
But the fishermen shouted, with staring eyes,
As they threw her the rope from shore :

“ Wert thou washed away, O lighthouse May,
A waif and unwilling guest ?
Or hither hath flown the isle’s eaglet lone,
Through air from her blast-beat nest ?

“ The sea indeed may give up its dead,
If it giveth thee up alive !
Come in to the women, — come in and speak, —
So fierce these rains they drive ! ”

They bore her in ; and they crowded round.
She panted, and then could say,
“ Oh, we were forgotten ! — The oil ! — Who ships
For my homeward voyage to-day ? ”

“ To-day is too stormy, lighthouse May.
Sit safe by the chimney’s blaze.”
She said, “ This life is scarce long enough
To spare out its stormy days.”

“ This is no day for maids or men,
With winds or waves to fight.”
She said, “ The sorer the toil to-day,
The sweeter the rest to-night.”

She pleaded the need till the hearers cried,
 "Your doom on your own rash head!"
Then "God be my aid," she turning sighed,
 "For I go, alive or dead ;

"But the sailors shall not look this night
 In vain, for our wonted spark
To point them aright, with its finger of light,
 Through the wide and wasteful dark."

No more the torn sail could face the gale.
 With the oars the waves she beat ;
The waves, in their rage, beat the oars again.
 The rain it was changed to sleet.

The sleet was changed, ere the twilight fell,
 Into lashing and blinding snow ;
And which was the snow, and which the spray,
 No more could she see or know,

Till she struck on the reef that since then doth bear
 The name of the Maiden's Doom, —
Just as the lighthouse's golden spear
 Ran through the murderous gloom, —

Struck and rebounded, then crashed again ;
 But amid the wild turmoil, —
The tangle of timber and sails and waves, —
 She seized on the cask of oil :

"The tide is running outward-bound,
To help me swim to the isle ;
And, if I can keep my wits so long —
'T is not more than half a mile."

She swam ; and the cask before her swam ;
And the billows swam beside ;
And eye and brain and mind and soul
Were swimming all with the tide.

She rose on the swelling surge, and saw
How the lighthouse lamp burned red.
"Oh, bring me safe home, — with the oil, — in time, —
Oh God, — my God !" she said.

She sank in the emptying trough and saw —
Saw, as she sank adown
And the growing islet towards her swam, —
How the lighthouse lamp burned brown.

She thought, "In his name, who trod down the waves,
And made the dear calm return,
If the spark of my life must go out in this strife,
Still let but yon lantern burn !"

The wind had torn into rents and rags
The clouds and the wide-flung sea ;
And the moon climbed up and peered over the crags,
Wide-mouthed, the waves to see.

And showed from the rocks, to the two old folks
On the watch, a weltering form,
That half rose from a wave as if to save
Some treasure from the storm.

"Lay hold on the sea-weeds, — on the peaks!"
They shouted and screamed o'erhead;
"Bind thee fast to this cable, May, oh May!" —
It drew up the oil instead.

Again they lowered in haste and fear.
The cable burdened swung;
Then oh, 't was lightened! It leapt up bare!
Again and again they flung,

Leaned headlong, and strained their sight in vain
O'er the sea-swept landing-place.
They wailed; but again the lamp shone out.
Did it shine in a dying face?

Good-night, brave swimmer! True heart, sleep well,
While thy lamp shines over thy grave,
Content though one must go down, go down
A many to light and save.

THE CLURICAUNE; OR, TIM CASSIDY'S LUCK.

“ ‘THE Cluricaune’ ! Now what queer word, or queerer thing is that? ”

“ Ah, faix, yer honour would n't be so innocint ! ” says Pat ;
 “ Sure, in yer books o' history, yer honour 's read the tale
 Of how one bothered Crummle in the house o' the O'Naile? —
 Ye did n't? — Well, the Cluricaune is jist a little chap,
 That has a little pea-green coat an' little scarlet cap,
 Big silver buttons on the coat an' buckles on the shoes,
 An' great big wrinkles crumplin' round the little eyes an' nose,
 An' lives to be five hundred year, if not a thousand, old,
 An' hoards an' hides an' counts an' keeps a jolly pot of gold,
 An' haunts the homes of quality, — raal quality is thim, —
 An' sets a whistlin' 'hind the wall, an' minds the brogues of him.”

“ What did it do to Cromwell? ”

“ Ah, whin good King Charles was hurried
 From aff his throne, Noll marched right here, — the thief of all the
 worl'd ! —

An' as he 'd come a-visitin' wid all his rabble rout,
 The great O'Naile, who 'd scorn to keep sich company, marched out ;
 Whin Crummle to his cellar straight, as solernn as the grave,
 Come struttin' down to try his tap, not axin' ‘ By yer lave.’
 He drew his sword, an' bored a cask. Wid watery mouth, he mutthered
 A hasty grace. He tuk a gulp ; an' sure he choked an' sputthered.
 (The famous claret, it was turned to nothin' but sea-watther !)
 The nixt, he tuk a little sup, — an' looked athirst for slaughtther.
 Thin, wid his pickled tongue, he bid his captains taste the rest.

They wint t'rough all the butts — thirteen ; — the last, it wa'n't the best.

Thin back they give Noll's drinkin'-cup ; an' sure, whin that was done, He smashed it on the cellar-flure an' wint aff like a gun :

'Now fire an' steel ! Confound thim all ! But this is past all bearin' !'

"A voice says, 'It's meself that's pained, to hear yer saintship swearin' ;'

An' up they looked intill the roof wid all their eyes aflame,

An' see — the little Cluricaune a-settin' on a baam

Jist like a tailor, wid his pipe, a-smokin' at his ease,

His grinnin' chaps betwixt his hands an' elbows on his knees.

The Cluricaune pulled aff his cap an' bowed wid all his might.

(The Cluricaune may be sevale, but always is perlite.)

"'Defy the fiend !' roars Oliver, 'Presint ! — take aim ! — fire !' Jist

He caught the bullets one by one, quick in his little fist

As if he was a-playin' ball, and threw thim in their faces

So hard he made thim tingle well, an' dance an' rub the places.

'Obleeged,' says he ; 'perhaps you 'd like to play that game agin ; —

I 'm not so young as oncet I was, but growin' rather thin

An' hard to hit ; — an', if I might advise, you 'd better try

A touch-hole lighted wid a spark from out your lovin' eye.

Manetime it's but too proud I am, yer worship's min would be

A-spendhin' powdher on salutes fired for the likes o' me ;

An', if I 'd not be tthroublesome, I 'd ax yees to disclose

How much ye might be owin' for the paintin' of yer nose.

(I 've lived upon this very spot sence Ossian sang of yore,

An' many noses seen, but ne'er so fine a nose before.)

An', plase yer worship, one thing more I would be very glad

To know, if ye can tell how long the blest new saints has had

A dispensation to make free wid neighbours' bite and sup,

An' if 't was Satan sold it thim, an' whin their time is up.'

"Then Crummle clapped into his prayers ; an' so Knock let him aff, —

(That was the little goblin's name), an' did but scream an' laugh,
Till Noll had run too far to hear, — from further punishmint.
But, whin the great O'Naile come back an' to his cellar wint,
Knock brought the claret safe agin, — save but one cask or less
He 'd rightly shared among his frinds to dhrink to his success.

"Sure it 's the truth I 'm tellin' yees ! Ye would n't think I 'd lie !
Sure was n't it me very self, that one time got a spy
Of him a-dodgin' me ? — He run a tombstone round an' round,
The tombstone of the last O'Naile, widin the churchyard ground. —
Or if it was n't jist meself, why then, when all was done,
It was me own half-brother's wife, her second cousin's son,
That caught one oncet, an' won his luck ; an', faix, that 's all the same.

"He was a darin', tearin' boy, Tim Cassidy by name.
He loved the lovely Peggy Blake, the Flower o' Ballyglash ;
An' Peggy liked him too ; but 't was her father loved the cash ;
An' Tim might coort an' Tim might rave, — Tim on his knees might
fall

Till he would wear the patches t'rough, — no use at all, at all.
His face grew very laan an' long, that was so wide an' funny ;
An', whin he would n't think on Peg, he 'd think on naught but money.
He let the plough an' sowin' go ; his heart was almost gone ;
He set himself by day an' night to catch the Cluricaune.

"He 'd hear him here, — he 'd hear him there, — a-hammerin' at his
brogue ;
Till oncet Tim crept around a hedge ; an' there he see the rogue !
Tim screwed his gaze on him ; for that 's the way to hold him fast.

Clu shook his small bald pate ; an' up his small red cap he cast.

Tim would n't give the hat a squint, but kept it for the head.

'The top o' the mornin' to yees, Tim,' the Cluricaune, he said.

" 'Good evenin', kindly,' answers Tim ; for moonshine jist began.

" 'The even an' morn 's the same,' says Clu, 'unto an idle man.'

" 'Who telled ye I was idle?'

" 'Sure, ye 've spint on me some leisure.'

" 'Perhaps ye 'll take a walk wid me, an' see?'

" Says Clu, 'Wid pleasure.

Look for me hammer first,' he says, to make Tim glance awry.

" 'Look first,' says Tim, 'if any dust ye 'd see widin me eye!'

" 'No grain,' says Clu ; 'how can old Blake, whose blindness makes me mourn,

Not see the beauty Peggy does in thim fine eyes o' yourn?'

" 'No fear, me jewel, but a great improvemint he 'll behold

In all me faatures, whin he 'll see your little crock o' gold!'

Wid that, Tim caught Clu up.

" Says he, 'Thin asy is the word ;

Ye need n't pinch me toetoes aff as if I was a birrd,

But fair and softly carry me to the nine-acre bog.'

" Tim would n't stand at tthrifles ; though he wore his Sunday tog, An', the first hole he waded t'rough, the wind blew aff his hat.

" 'I'm sorry for yer loss,' says Clu, a-grinnin' like a cat.

" 'Give me yer gold,' says Tim ; 'an' keep yer pity for yerself.'

" 'I'll give yees my advice,' says Clu ; 'if ne'er ye 'd want for pelf,

Thin mind yer business half as sharp as now ye 're mindin' me. —

There, in the middle of the bog, a quagmire don't ye see? —

Bedad, ye 're like the girrl that kept one eye upon her mother,

While still the other lovely orrb was fixed upon her brother,

Yet watched her swateheart all the time ; for sure ye know enough,

Not lookin'.'

“ ‘Tthru for yees ! I 'd go, a-playin' Blindman's Buff,
Straight all the countthry t'rough, no fear ! ’

“ Says Clu, ‘ That same 's yer loss.
A rovin' blade, he gits no good, — a rollin' stone, no moss.
But now we 're come intill the place. Ye 'll plase to set me down,
An' dig yon bulrush up ; an' all ye find shall be yer own. ’

“ ‘ I could n't spare ye yit, ’ says Tim, a-givin' him a shake ;
‘ Dig yees that bulrush up ; or see if all yer bones won't ache. ’

“ ‘ Wid all the pleasure in the worrld ! To fetch me spade I 'll fly. ’

“ ‘ Oh, help me ! Save me, Tim ! ’ a voice like Peggy's shrieked
close by.

“ Thin sure Tim's head was turnned ; for thin, — thin first, — he
turnned his head ;

An' with a whoop that shook the bog, the Cluricaune had fled !
No Peggy Blake was to be seen, — no miser's lovely daughter ! —
But lowerin' clouds an' settin' moon an' flats o' peat an' wather.

“ Tim thought 'twas rather late for him to do much more that
night,

But only to make sure agin to know the rush by sight ;
A little haated wid the walk, he splashed into the pool
Wherein it waded to the neck a-lookin' calm an' cool,
An' pulled his garter aff an' tied it round for a cravat,
Thin saw a fine witch-hazel near, an' plucked a twig o' that
An' twined it in a ring round rush and garter, for a spell
‘ To keep all safe an' sure, wint aff, an' slept not long but well,
An' by the break o' day was there oncet more wid spade an' pail
To bear the tthreasure home, but first the wather out to bale ;
Whin, jist as sure as I 'm no saint, in one short night he found
Nine hundred bulrushes sprung up about the self-same ground ;
An' each a garter wore like his, an' each, a hazel-ring ;
An' whin he 'd start to dig one up, another up would spring !

His heart was splittin' into halves. He turned quite cold an' flabby,
An' sat down on the empty pail an' cried jist like a babby.

"Well, there Tim's story inded, — all, I mane, he iver told ;
But all the neighbours knew, at last he somehow got the gold.
(Yer honour's self may judge. 'T is sure he showed old Blake a guinea,
In ten years' time, for Peggy's crown, — a shillin' for her pinny.)
He grew a miser from that morn himself, the more by token ;
He 'd drudge from dawn to dark until his back was almost broken.
An' whin he 'd married Peggy, sure their childer was the same ;
An' delve an' save, all round their farm, foriver was the game.
Their blind boy sat an' baskets wove for all the country round.
They earned odd testers ; but 't is plain a tester ain't a pound ;
An' pounds they got. Tim could n't dhrink a dhrap, for fear he 'd tell
The way to win the Cluricaune ; for that would break the spell
Or bargain that he had on him, 't was thought ; but all he 'd say
Was, ' All were welkim to a share of all he brought away
From the nine-acre bog ; an' that was jist a little sense.'
An' when my wife come walkin' opcet an' axed him o'er the fence,
Jist friendly-like, ' What was the name o' that, that oncet he caught
By moonlight,' — answers Tim, ' A cold.' ' But no,' says she, ' that
brought

Yer luck to yees?' ' Work all,' says Tim ; an' wid his plough goes he
Along the doublin' furrow back, which scarce was mannerly
In deed or spache ; at least to me it sounded like a taunt, —
Whin I was told, — on dacent folks like her, that won't or can't
Demane thimselves like nagur slaves. I've heard of ' Knock ' an'
' Fawn '

An' ' Larkspur,' ' Rob ' an' sich, before, but ne'er a Cluricaune
Called ' Work-all.' No ! — no Cluricaune was ever heard or seen
Wid sich an ugly name as that, sence Erin first was green !"

THE FIFER AND DRUMMER OF SCITUATE.

"ABBY, Abby, they 're a-comin'!"

"Who 's a-comin'? — What 's to do?" —

"Oh, the British! An' there ain't a soul to home but me an' you!
Job 's gone courtin'. Noah 's a-fishin'. All the neighbours be afar.
Peep; — they 're two great boat-loads, rowin' for our corn-ships at the bar!
When they 've took 'em, — what 's to hender? — don't you s'pose they 'll
come right down, —

Pike an' gun an' blood an' murder, — here an' rob an' burn the town?"

"No, I don't, — not ef I 'm spared; an' don't you have a chicken-
heart.

Le' me think; an' then I 'll tell ye. Then we both must play our part.
Becky, all we 've ever got to mind, is jest to do our best.

When it 's done, we never need to fear to leave to God the rest.

Nobody can't die but once; an' ef our own turn comes to-day,

Let it find us at our dooty, an' then find us when it may.

Though their swellin' hearts be mighty, — though each comes like ten
times ten, —

Say your prayers, an' jest remember Englishmen ain't naught but men.

I 'll run round an' lock the house up; an' you scamper for your life

Up the garret-stairs an' fetch us, to the barn, the drum an' fife.

Make believe we 're the milishy comin'; girls be good as boys

For some things, — folks need n't tell me, — jest as good to make a
noise."

Becky scampers. Abby fastens door and window breathlessly,
In her hurry puts the kitten in her pocket with the key,
Calls the dog, and drives the cow in from her grazing in the croft

To her stall and, dragging Becky, scrambles up into the loft,
 Opens wide the great barn-window, seizes on her father's drum,
 Cries, "You keep the fife, dear Becky, — *that's* right, — sound like
 kingdom come !

Think you 've got the trump that Gideon blew against the heathen host,
 When the Lord's sword conquered Midian an' their princes' heads were
 lost.

Won't the British lose their heads too? — Mebbe, if we keep our own."
 While she chatters, she is drumming till the grumbling roof doth groan.

"Yankee Doodle," — "Hail, Columbia ! " pealed with many a deaf-
 ening bout ;

Like a cherub's on a tomb-stone, Becky's dimpled cheeks puffed out ;
 Abby's hazel eyes flashed lightning as her rapid sticks she plied.
 Marching still and countermarching to and fro, from side to side,
 O'er the soft gray hills and valleys of the clover-scented hay,
 Sounding like an army coming, up and down, from far away,
 Now through rich brown shadows went they, — lovely, lively Yankee
 girls, —

Now an elm let stealthy sunlight in on fair and chestnut curls.
 Fifing, drumming, panting, stumbling, half in fright and half in fun,
 When they dared to reconnoitre, then they saw the British run :
 " Now 'The Rogue's March,' little sister, — louder ! — louder ! — let us
 play, —

One more pootty piece of music jest to speed 'em on their way."

When the Sunset's gold and amber, wrought upon the cobwebbed
 gloom

Of the straw-hung old barn-chamber, made it seem a tap'stried room,
 And " their folks " came home, each rafter o'er each little merry head
 Rang with peals of girlish laughter as they both looked down and said,
 " Brother, uncle, father, welcome ! But a little late you 're come ;
 Scituate would now be taken, but for us, — an' fife an' drum ! "

Straight men knew the situation, ran the rescued ships to see,
 Thronged the barn-yard then and, shouting, gave the damsels three times
 three,
 Wild with mirth ; and ever after, — oft as general-training day
 Called the gallant lads of Scituate from the field and forge away, —
 'Neath the farm-house' twilight-windows, fife and drum were duly played
 To those gallant maids of Scituate in memorial serenade.



FROM "KATHARINE MORNE."

ONCE, on the sands beside the sounding sea,
 I wrote, " I love my love, — my love loves me."
 Up ran the fickle waves ; in cruel play
 They washed the dear " My love loves me " away,
 But left the reach of tides and times above,
 To stiffen into stone, " I love my love."



RE-UNITED?

Two happy babies on one bear-skin playing ;
 A boy and girl on one greensward a-maying ;
 A youth and maiden at one altar both
 For her to plight, — but not to him, — her troth ;
 Two dwellers in one street, — one ne'er who said,
 " I 'm outraged, — save me ! " — one who ne'er can aid ;

Two corpses lying 'mid one mountain's glooms,
 Not far aloof although in separate tombs ;
 Two beings sitting on one summer cloud,
 Released for aye from wedding-ring and shroud ;
 Oh, will it be to them at last, — at last ! —
 As if they ne'er were sundered in the past ?



THE POET AND THE POSTMAN.

A NATIONAL PROTEST. .

"BOSTON, Feb. 14th, 1880.

"I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Longfellow a few days since, and took the opportunity of telling him that my rhyming machinery was out of gear. . . . The truth is, I am busy with another kind of work, and it will never do to shift a barrel-organ from one tune to another while it is playing. . . . I do not mean that I am writing an epic or a tragedy or an ode, but that . . . the burdens of an almost unmanageable correspondence are about as much as I am equal to. — O. W. H——."

SCENE: *Street or road, in front of a poet's mansion, or humble abode.*

Columbia loquitur:

"I KEEP a Poet — (ay, and two,
 Or three, or four), my chars to do, —
 To write my epics and bucolics
 And lyrics for my harmless frolics.
 My chars are half undone, and why?
 That I shall see to by and by ; —
 The Postman to his door-bell clings,
 Faint with the burthen that he brings.

"Avaunt, thou Postman scant of cheer !
What dost thou with my poet here ?"

The Postman :

"I toll the knell of murdered Time, —
I missives bring from every clime
Where English-reading men rehearse
The music of his matchless verse.
They read ; their hearts within them burn ;
And very promptly in return
They ask him for his autograph,
A little wine his health to quaff,
His history, views of Life and Natur',
And influence with the Legislatur',
His politics, his points of faith, —
Yea, ask for everything he hath,
Or hath not, — for his hair, — his money.
They send him praise as sweet as honey ;
But even honey cloyes at length
Nor, largely ta'en, increaseth strength."

"O weary postman, by thy leave," —

[Columbia, with a compassionate air, "gently but firmly" relieves the postman of his bag, which she shoulders with difficulty, sets down with APLOMB, and opens:]

"Humph, humph ! I must my eyes believe."

[She reads aloud:]

"Most glorious Minstrel,
"Todd (Alonzo),
Sues for his brother twin, Alphonso ;

A gentle soul unmeet for toil,
 Or contact rough with Life's turmoil,
 He only asks for learned leisure,
 With stipends small. A perfect treasure
 You'll find him, to suggest new themes
 With hints from his weird beauteous dreams,
 Each *lapsum pennæ* to abolish,
 And give your lays their final polish.'

" 'O Striker of the lofty lyre,
 My own proud soul is all afire
 With genius like your own; and you
 I so admire that, if you knew,
 You could not but admire me too,
 In common gratitude,—a bard
 Of Nature's making, up quite hard!
 I know you dote on modest worth
 That does not boast the stamp of birth;
 But, fallen on an unworthy age,
 The public slights my wondrous page,
 And will not read, and much less buy,
 Unheralded; and therefore I
 Must stoop to beg an introduction
 From you, to this, my last production,
 Whose dedication to all time
 Embalms your name in deathless rhyme.
 " 'Your dauntless still, though sorely vexed
 " 'Orion Lambkill.'

" Well! what next?—

" 'My sweet mamma and Uncle Tom,
 And all the dear old folks at home,
 Are sure you will delighted be
 To get a little note from me.

I have not very much to tell,
 But that we all are pretty well ;
 (Poor Bubbie though, to tell the truth,
 Is sort o' fractious with his tooth.)
 I want a letter, good and long,
 And copy of your last new song ;
 (We always think your songs are splendid.)
 And now it's time my note was ended.
 Hereto I set my hand so plump,
 " ' Your unknown darling,
 " ' Dollie Dump.' "

[Here Columbia sits down by the postman, who has sunk in a swoon, and continues to read aloud in similar strains until too hoarse to be heard. She then goes on to herself till her eyes are too tired to see, when, having in the mean time recovered her voice by a sufficient period of rest, she rises in wrath and resumes speech:]

" You mob of spoilers ! By the Nine,
 This kindly, preyed-on man is mine, —
 Mine and the world's, — I 'll have you know !
 Must all mankind in him forego
 Their common rightful share, that you
 May have, each one, one *billet-doux* ?
 I 'll answer for him."

[She takes from her pocket a demijohn of ink, a thousand packets of post-cards, and ten gross of ever-pointed pens, and begins:]

" ' Mr. Todd,
 " ' Take like a man to spade or hod.'
 " ' Dear Dolly Dump,
 " ' Go write your copies.'
 " ' Orion Lambkill,
 " ' Jasmin's shop is
 A hair-dresser's. His lovely verse

Men never find a hair the worse ;
Nor brave Hans Sachs e'er lamed his muse
For glory's march, by making shoes.'"

[*A pause of some days, weeks, or months consumed in penmanship ; after which Columbia perorates thus :*]

"To t' others now, to make an end,
A foolscap *circular* I'll send :

" 'Ye loving — vultures, hovering o'er
My well-nigh spent good troubadour,
But one thing more, for pity's sake, —
Example, — seek from him to take.
He reached the summit where he stands
On his own feet, not others' hands ;
Nor any, up Parnassus' hill,
Were ever borne while sitting still.
He freely gives you of his best ;
In conscience, let him keep the rest
In 'sweet self-privacy' of life,
As far as may be, free from strife.
Bear your own burden and *refrain* ;
Nor lay on him one needless pain.
Most rarely have the fates forgot
To lay on him the common lot, —
Laid often with uncommon weight.

" 'When he is young, his gentle mate
Will want her feathers and her nest,
His care, his converse, and his jest ;
Her young must not for hunger cry ;

He has his pens and ink to buy, —
Has daily hours just twenty-four,
And never any minute more, —
While harder work is seldom done,
Than some of his, beneath the sun.

“ ‘When he is old, he well may crave,
And very surely ought to have,
A chance his spirit’s raiment worn
To cleanse if soiled, — to mend if torn, —
His unmolested fire-side nook
And easy-chair and well-earned book,
The few old faces of old friends
And, when their chat and laughter ends,
Some pause to lay old ghosts perhaps, —
Perhaps, and even sundry naps.

“ ‘The unsparing muses many a day
Their tunes still on his heart-strings play.
Think you, there is in this no strain? —
No wear and tear to nerve and brain?
His noblest word should be his last ;
But on him feels he, gaining fast,
The shadow of the fleetfoot night
Wherein no man can work or write.
Let importune Intrusion cease
To haunt his threshold ; and, in peace,
Oh, *let* him utter, while he can,
Great messages from God to Man ! ’ ”

ODE ON MORTALITY.

[FROM WORDSWORTH AMENDED BY AN "ADVANCED (?) THINKER."]

OUR birth is but a dream and a forgetting :
The Dust that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.
Not in entire forgetfulness,
Nor wanting a fur travelling-dress,
But trailing tails of monkeys, do we come,
From Protoplasm, our home.
Menageries lie about our infancy !
We are not what we were primordially.
The laws of Evolution
Work out much queer confusion.
At length the Man, the soulless child of Clay,
Stands winking at the "new light" of the day.



FOR CHILDREN.

THE DAISY IN THE GARDEN.

"COME, little Daisy, and walk with me
To see the Dandelion that lives by the sea."
"No, little master, I 'd rather stay
In my garden safe, than roam and stray.

Here the beds are trim ; and drought is not ;
And the gardener comes with his watering-pot.
I was planted here ; and here I belong ;
And the robin has come to sing me a song,
That is sweeter to me than the loud, long roar
Of the wind and the waves on the wild, lone shore.
But I 'm glad to think that, even there,
All things are under my Maker's care,
And the same kind Hand that shelters me
Is over the Dandelion by the sea."

THE DANDELION BY THE SEA.

"DANDELION, Dandelion, up and away
To the Daisy that lives in the garden gay ;
She says that she loves it so much more,
Than your stony place on the barren shore."
"She is contented ; and that is right ;
But I cannot share in her tame delight ;
For a simple and hardy life I love,
Fineries and fences far above ;
And I am too glad that my glorious home
Is where free winds roar and where wild waves foam,
Where the sea-gull soars, if no robin sings,
And the plover fans my face with his wings,
And, when I thirst by the briny sea,
The Clouds fly over to water me.
But, in places under God's kind care,
Good is to be found everywhere."
"Where is the way, that good to find?"

"It lies in a loving and trusting mind."
 "Dandelion, Dandelion, all too soon
 Will your shining sun be a misty moon ;
 You will be faded ; you will be dead ;
 The pale, pale Snow-drifts will make your bed !"
 "In his own good time then, God will bring
 Me another sun and another spring."

Kopf Eines Mannes.

SET the easel down, — there, where the magic north light
 Streams unearthly and pure as th' Aurora of Night, —
 The wand, good to help me to conjure a ghost
 To this sunshiny day from the Night's viewless host,
 And the oil, — oil of gladness, — that soon, though not mine,
 Shall the face of my subject make gaily to shine.
 California a cluster must yield of her best,
 Of the great mottled grapes that the friars of the West,
 Doomed never to see their old vineyards again,
 To cheer the lone Mission brought thither from Spain, —
 To refresh my sweet toil with their sweetest of wine,
 The innocent juice that comes new from the vine.
 Milk and honey, just now, I can well do without ;
 Crowns, palaces, sceptres, I don't care about.
Carpe diem. — If any one calls, you can say
 I'm engaged. — If a friend, he will straight go away,
 And leave me to feast on the glory that falls,
 And the rapture that dwells, within four silent walls.

That 's all ; thank you. — The door shuts. — So now for my box,
And my photograph fine, with the eyes of a fox
And a head like a god, that ere daylight is o'er
Is to come back and live, on the canvas, once more.

Please your *pose* to take. Little indeed could you know,
My gay, ruffling gallant of years long ago,
When you sat to Vandyck in your far-away home,
That from court or from camp your proud beauty should come,
In this scarcely known land, down a model to be
Unto a half-taught ignoramus like me.

Yet I 've called you, I fear, from the smouldering gloom
Of a much warmer place, to my bright, breezy room ;
(Your dumb lips seem to say, you were light in your truth
And as sly as the Fiend, in your beautiful youth,
Used unblest words and flagons, to speak and to quaff,
And win loves with a smile and cast off with a laugh ;)
But soft hearts beat not now where your bright glances fall,
Nor ache when you lean with your face to the wall ;
And you need not confront me with quite so much scorn.
Or did subtle Sir Anton, long ere I was born,
Catch that sneer bent on him from your young place and power,
And for ages avenge the offence of an hour?
Did you see, — did you dream, — he was painting you whole, —
The grand, manly body, — the *serpentine* soul?

Your mocking clear eye, with its keen, furtive smile,
Defying me still, still has in it such guile,
That I shudder e'en now as it shows to my thought
The harms, unto others — and you, — that it wrought.

Sin is brief; doom is long. The words die on my tongue,
As I view you, so happy, so fair, and so young !

Ah me, and ah me, unknown "man's" nameless "head,"
'T is a work rather piteous, this raising the dead !
A light, tender touch of this sweet rose I must
Lay on your poor cheek, that so long has been dust,
If but for the sake of some mother, whose joy
Was to kiss in that dimple her *good* baby boy.

And I sigh for the chances that may have been lost,
Ere the merry young man was a sorry old ghost, —
While behind those magnificent brows the great brain,
O'er the crowd, sat on high on the throne of its reign, —
Of waking the echoes of ne'er-to-die song,
Or uttering for aye with your magical tongue
A patriot's counsels, that live on and on
In his country's, when he to heaven's, glory is gone,
Of the life of a hero, the death of a saint,
A fame that not Slander herself could attain,
The loyal, long raptures of dear fire-side love,
Then wide mournings below, — wider welcomes above.

I will not believe it ! The limner malign, —
You maligned, must have been ! In this goodliest shrine,
No fiend ever dwelt ! Or the pencil was swayed
By some demon, or you for a moment betrayed
To some demon, whose look through your long lashes leers,
And but gives the lie to the rest of your years.
Send up here the penitent shade of Vandyck
To help me atone for his painted dislike,

And *then* I'll portray you, — not thus at your worst, —
At your glorious best as Heaven planned you at first,
And maintain that, ere Time his fleet pinions had furled
At your well-bewept tomb, you had proved to the world,
As best a man may in his short mortal span,
The heart and the hand, with the "Head, of a Man!"



A KNIGHT OF THE GOLDEN RULE.

"Now here 's a death among the 'Deaths,' that makes them seem a
roll of honour!"

"A general's? — statesman's? — *millionnaire's*, of countless sums the
famous donor?"

"No; Abel Chipman's, carpenter. No shining luck did e'er befall
him.

Knight of the Golden Rule we still may, if you will, most fitly call him.
A somewhat lame, (from Petersburg, when o'er the plain grim Death did
hover,

He bore a ball from going to bring a wounded rebel under cover,)
A strong, — of late, — tall, slender man, and dark, — in look a little
Spanish, —

Within his coffin yesterday from mournful eyes too soon did vanish.
Yet was he Plymouth-born and bred; and if he only said, 'I thank 'e,'
One noticed in his hearty voice the sweetness of a sea-side Yankee.
But if one passed the chapel when his brother Methodists were singing,

And paused perforce as long as one could hear his clear, full tenor
ringing,
'Nearer, my God, to Thee,' one felt one's-self; 'Jerusalem the Golden'
Woke slumbering yearnings winged to soar, upborne by his, with
ardours olden.

"He loved his book but, when a boy, with secret sighs renounced his
learning
And, to his little sisters' needs, the wages of his faithful earning.
He never was a married man. Fair Hephzibah preferred another.
He to her father made his suit and won her — for his younger brother;
And, when in wedded bliss they died, he led their orphans to his
dwelling
And reared them with a parent's pride, and tenderness beyond their
telling.

"If ached his heart, he comfort found in comforting some other's
sorrow.
He saved his money — when he could, — could give, but never beg nor
borrow.
Content and busy all day long, he served his God and served his
neighbour,
And relished social tale and song, when evening closed his hours of
labour.

"His own most rigorous confessor, by him his conscience ne'er was
shriven
With any good turn unreturned or any ill turn unforgiven.
He spake to present fellow men all needful truth, their wrath un-
fearing;
He spake of absent fellow men, as if they ne'er were out of hearing.

“ Yet was he not quite fearless, though his comrades all would own
him ‘ plucky ;’
For instance, he would sometimes say, that goods unshared were goods
unlucky,
And that, in light or angry speech, if any one invoked ‘ the devil,’
Around his path or board or bed, he brought too near the powers of
evil.

“ These simple notions of his youth, through all his life he ne’er
rejected :
That, ‘ Woman is a sacred thing ; and Age, *as* Age, to be respected ;’
That, ‘ Never any bargain, struck in private or in public mart, is
A *good* one, howsoever shrewd, that is not good for all the parties ;’
‘ Civility is due to all, who *ride* in carts or *drive* in coaches, —
Servility to none,’ (howe’er to foreign grandeurs made approaches
Great Dives Mushroom, whose papa earned certain monies as a sutler,
And who hath travelled to import airs studied from a peer — or butler ;)
And that ‘ To start for heaven with prayer, or works, alone, — the other
dropping, —
Is much the same as ’t were to go on pilgrimage on one foot hopping.’

“ Where’er his manly step came round, his ready kindnesses were
endless.
To Indian, ‘ Chinee,’ beast, and bird, he was a friend, — to all the
friendless.
One afternoon of late, he heard that not far off an Irish weaver
Was down in a forsaken hut with wife and children and ship-fever.
Not much he said ; but I suppose the ill news did not go much faster
Than he did — home to lock his door. He left a message for his master.
He had a bundle in his hand. He took his favourite one-eyed spaniel
‘ To make a visit of some weeks, perhaps ’ unto his crony Daniel,

Went whistling 'The Sweet By and By' and, entering without fuss or
fidget,
Shone with the sunset through the door on hollow eyes of Pat and
Bridget :
'Sure 't is the guardian angel come, yees be !' . He said, 'My name
is Chipman.
I've come to see to ye. Before, I've seen the fever when a ship-
man.'
He gave them blankets, meal, and milk, and then went out and cut
some fuel,
Drew water for their parching lips, and lit their fire and made their
gruel.

"And so, they lived ; and so — he died ; and people said it was a
pity ;
The weavers could be better spared than he from village, town, or
city.
But all men die ; and few, so well ; and, if the heavenly legions
wanted
Another soldier who could meet the hosts of hell with breast
undaunted,
Then Death's recruiting Angel scarce could find, from ocean unto
ocean,
Perhaps a known or unknown man more worthy of his grand
promotion."

NOTES.

Will backward lean for fear to stoop. P. 8. This expression, I fear, Sister Ellen owes to Miss Edgeworth.

Wrought of their dying amber, gold and red. P. 15. *Vide* Mrs. James T. Fields's beautiful elegy on William Morris Hunt.

Niflheim. P. 22. The northward-lying kingdom of Cold and Death in the Norse mythology.

The old, pure doctrine of the "Apostles' Creed." P. 23. A poem is scarcely the place for commentaries. But, whatever may have been the origin of this earliest of the creeds, its close agreement with both the letter and the spirit of the New Testament leads me to wish that, sooner or later, most Christian believers may unite upon it. This is the shape in which, I am informed, it was in use about the year A.D. 325:

"I Believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was, by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; under Pontius Pilate he was crucified and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Church; the Forgiveness of Sins; the Resurrection of the Body; and the Life Everlasting."

If the words "of the Body" should be struck out, or explained in conformity with those of St. Paul, there would seem to be nothing left here that is not scriptural. I trust it is hardly necessary for me to add, that I have little fear that any involuntary theological error ever kept any good man out of heaven.

For even dry hay. P. 23. May not some recent conversions to very antiquated superstitions be explained in this manner?

Some consecrated youth. P. 24. A type,—not a portrait. And I am glad to be able to say, that the most painful “representative of modern *thought*,” I was ever so unfortunate as to hear, was not a dweller in Massachusetts nor, I think, in New England.

Full as a peacock's tale of eyes, of I's. P. 25.

“A tale . . . dotted as thick as a peacock's with I's.”

LOWELL's *Fable for the Critics*.

Locke's puerilities. P. 25. John Locke, the English theologian and metaphysician, author of the paraphrase of St. Paul's Epistles, “*Essay on the Human Understanding*,” &c.

Or Butler's, now. P. 25. Joseph Butler, Bishop of Bristol, the author of Butler's “*Analogy of Religion*.”

A precious legacy from times scarce known. P. 26. The “*Book of Common Prayer*” took its present form, I understand, under the hands of Cranmer. But I suppose there can be no question that the petitions in it, including those of the Hebrew Psalms, are of very various antiquity.

The moral meaning. P. 31.

“The moral is the first business of the poet.”

DRYDEN, *quoted by* JOHNSON.

At theatres when the tragedy is o'er. P. 39. I am really unable to say whether this passage is original with me, or not.

The fair young form upon a sinking deck. P. 42. These lines refer to the sweet and noble memory of Susan Dimock, late physician to the New England Hospital for Women and Children. I never had the happiness and honour of her acquaintance. But another, associated with her in striving to aid some of the most wretched of God's creatures, spoke of her to me thus: “I think she was, of all the people I have known, the one *most like our Lord!*”

As one more bead of a rich rosary. P. 47.

“There's one more sun strung on my bead of days.”

HENRY VAUGHAN.

Poems of the War. P. 49. Being almost a Quaker on several subjects, and painfully uncertain whether anything can justify Christian men (or indeed any men) in slaying one another, I have hesitated about reprinting these poems. But I make doing so the occasion of uttering this doubtful protest. I think that they reflect truly much of the colour of the times in which they were written. And I do not suppose my readers to be much more likely than myself to attribute infallibility to my words, upon this or any other matter.

Faneuil Hall. P. 51. The reader, who would not be more nice than wise, may save himself some trouble with these lines, if he will drop the new-fangled dactylic pronunciation of Fan-you-will, — supposing him ever to have adopted it, — and will content himself, as Peter of the name was probably obliged to do, with simple *Fan'il*.

Shackled Justice' threshold. P. 52. On one of these occasions, a chain was actually thrown across the doorway of the Court-house. A Chief-Justice of Massachusetts was said to have stooped beneath it, on his way to his bench. This the late Judge Wells of Cambridge, be it remembered, refused to do.

Unto its native dust. P. 56. I am not sure that these men proved to be natives of Massachusetts; perhaps they were not all, even of New England.

His tryst with Death. P. 71. This phrase, I may have unconsciously borrowed from the title of a poem of Miss Procter's; but her application of it was a very different one.

Jack Turner. P. 78. "The Southern papers are coming in with their accounts of the murder of Jack Turner in Choctaw County, Alabama. There is no longer a reasonable doubt that he was hanged for political reasons." — *Boston Daily Advertiser*.

The gallows and scourge. P. 78. "Jack's captains were more or less scourged. One was treated to the indignity of being hung up . . . and terribly tortured." — *Meridian (Mississippi) Mercury, quoted by the Boston Daily Advertiser*.

In the churchyard. P. 83. This poem was partly suggested by a passage in the writer's correspondence with a mourner at a distance.

Like the Holy Ghost did pass. P. 85. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," &c. — *The Gospel according to St. John*.

Through thinning woodlands. P. 93.

"Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,
One set slow bell will seem to toll
The passing of the sweetest soul
That ever look'd with human eyes."

TENNYSON.

God takes from us, to perfect it. P. 94.

"If it seem
That He draws back a gift, . . .
'T is to finish it up to your dream."

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

The Next Wave. P. 100. Many will remember the sad story which suggested these lines: Some years ago, a lovely inland girl was taken by one or two of her friends to enjoy her first sight of the sea. In her enthusiasm and inexperience, she ventured too far into "Rafe's Chasm," and was drowned. She is said to have shown a singular fortitude and to have called, of course with a literal meaning, to those who were trying to save her, "The *next wave* will bring me back."

A step-dame grim. P. 113. The mythical Stepmother of the Ballad. As I have seen her in real life, the stepmother of the present is quite as apt to play the part of a guardian angel.

Sir Conrad of Ravenstone. P. 121. This ballad was suggested by a fine and fierce old legend in the "Deutsche Sagen herausgegeben von den Brüdern Grimm." But I have taken many liberties with the original. There the knight lightens his steed and secures time for his repentance, by the simple and primitive expedient of killing his page. He afterwards purchases his salvation by ecclesiastical architecture and so-forth.

Twelve ages passed within the crypt. P. 139. To wit: from the time of the burial.

The Cluricaune. P. 147. Again I must give credit for my material,—this time to Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall's charming book "Ireland, North and West."

No Cluricaune was ever heard or seen. P. 152. Whose fault?

The Fifer and Drummer of Scituate. P. 153. Founded on an incident in our war of 1812.

The Daisy in the Garden. P. 162. The first couplet of this nursery ditty was furnished by a child.

The sweetness of a sea-side Yankee. P. 167. This line may raise a laugh; and it by no means does apply to all sea-side Yankees. Yet I have noticed that sweetness of voice among them more than once; and I am not afraid to appeal for the justness of my observation to those generally acquainted with them.

THE END.

